CAPTAIN KITTY COLONIAL

LUCY FOSTER MADISON

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MADAME GERRITT DREW HER INTO A CLOSE EMBRACE

CAPTAIN KITTY COLONIAL

By LUCY FOSTER MADISON

Author of "Joan of Arc," "Lafayette," etc.

Illustrated by
Marguerite Davis

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Captain Kitty, Colonial

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INTRODUCTION

THESE adventures of Kitty Gerritt took place on the Island of Manhattan nine or ten years before the American Revolution. Her everyday life, as shown in the story, is of great interest to us of today, and the exciting experiences which began for her in the fall of 1765 enhance the charm of the story. They are unusual and thrilling, yet the whole tale makes a wonderfully clear picture of the life of the early Dutch inhabitants of Manhattan. The author, as in her other stories, is faithful to historical detail and has given truthful local color.

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Captain Kitty, Colonial

CHAPTER I

KITTY GERRITT'S BAD DAY

It was afternoon of a warm October day, 1765, and the Island of Manhattan lay sweltering under a heat almost as great as that of summer. A heat that intensified the scarlet, and crimson, and gold of the leaves of the dense forest that stretched clear from the rocky heights of Spuyten Duyvel to the salt marshes and low hills that bordered the large fresh water lake that lay near the bay. The resplendent colorings of the trees, the sparkling waters of its rivers and bay made the Island glow like a many-hued jewel in the radiant sun-

shine. Its surface was gently undulating, presenting every variety of hill and dale, of brook and rivulet, of pond and salt marsh; the whole forming a pleasing picture. But water, forest, hill and valley were not all of the panorama: scattered among the woodland were farms and villas, and here and there tall spires of churches caught and reflected the sun rays where villages lay among the trees; while at the extreme southern end of the Island, at the head of its majestic bay, sat the thriving little city of New York in proud consciousness of the fact that it was the " Metropolis and grand Mart of the Province."

It was a beautiful little city nestled among wood-crowned hills and grassy valleys with a water frontage unsurpassed anywhere else in the world. That it was a home city was shown by the many churches whose steeples towered among the trees that lined the length and breadth of the streets, and by the scattering houses built with a glorious contempt of space in the midst of large grounds ornamented with gardens and orchards. That it was also a city of trade was denoted by the wharves and shipping which lay along its main front on the Sound River; while a quadrangular fort with batteries, standing on a slight elevation among the rocks of the strand overlooking the bay, added a martial touch of quaint dignity.

In one of the tree-lined streets called "Bayard,"[1]

[1] Duke Street commonly called Bayard. Now Stone.

near to the Coenties Market, stood a large brick house with windows open to the sunshine. Through the windows came a monotonous hum of voices, for the house was the school and dwelling of Clementina and Jane Fergusson where knowledge of Reading, Writing, French, Deportment, Dancing, Embroidery, and plain and fancy Sewing, was imparted to young gentlewomen.

That the unseasonable warmth of the October day had had a marked effect upon the school was easily noticeable in the listless attitudes of the pupils, the droning tones of their voices in recitation, and their general lack of interest. Even the staid schoolmistress, Miss Clementina Fergusson, had relaxed from her usual uprightness, and sat in her high-backed chair with less than her customary rigidity. Such being the state of things it was not a matter for wonder that in the furthest corner from the teacher's high platform a young girl might have been seen engaged in doing nothing more arduous than looking out of the window.

She was about thirteen years old, small for her age, and as dainty a little maid as could be found in the whole city. Her flaxen curls, her great blue eyes, her fair complexion tinted like a sea-shell proclaimed her Holland descent. Before her on the desk lay a copy which read:

" Be Dilligent In Thy Studies."

But alas for the admonition! The quill pen had

dropped from her fingers, inkhorn and powder were untouched, and her copy-book showed a white page upon which no trace of the model appeared. For Kitty Gerritt had yielded to the lassitude engendered by the heat, and sat gazing wistfully out at the blue sky, the gorgeous trees, the radiant sunshine, and the battalion of clouds that flew across the ether like birds.

"Oh!" she was thinking. "How beautiful 'twould be to be on the Collect now with Dirck! Instead, here I am penned up like a chicken in a coop. Wouldn't it be delightsome to be one of those clouds? If I were one I'd sail, and I'd sail, and I'd sail clear across the sea to where the King sits in his palace, and where lovely ladies ——"

"Catherine! Catherine Gerritt!" The voice of Mistress Clementina Fergusson broke in upon the little girl's musings, causing her to start violently, so severe were its accents. Miss Clementina never called her "Catherine" unless she was guilty of misconduct. Usually it was "Kitty."

"Twice have I spoken to you and received no reply," continued the stern tones of the teacher. "What hath come over you that your wits are so wool-gathering? It evinces a lack of respect that you should so neglect your study."

"I—I meant not disrespect," stammered Kitty, rising deferentially to reply, and blushing furiously as she found the eyes of the other girls turned upon her. "'Tis

only that the sky, and the sunshine, and the pretty trees make me want to be with them instead of in this warm room."

"I dare say," remarked the schoolmistress dryly. "Perchance the other pupils feel the same way, but behold! Do they idle and cease to improve their time? Nay, Catherine; for they know that the busier they are the more quickly will the hour pass. Do you do likewise, and improve the moments."

With difficulty Kitty suppressed a giggle, for the girls had turned hastily at the teacher's words, and were bending over their books seemingly absorbed in study, but she sat down sedately as Miss Clementina gave the command:

"Put away books, young ladies. Monsieur Dupre hath come for the dancing lesson."

There was a stir of interest as the door opened to admit the teacher of dancing and deportment, and the girls put away their books with alacrity. Kitty's indolence vanished instantly. She was fond of dancing, and, in common with the other girls, adored the dapper little Frenchman who taught them. Consequently she never lost an opportunity of teasing and tormenting him.

"Bon jour, demoiselles!" Monsieur Dupre greeted the school smilingly.

"Bon jour, monsieur," the girls answered in an animated chorus.

It was the last exercise before dismissal; so, whether it was the weather, the prospect of tasks ended, or what not, gayety and high spirits took the place of languor and inattention to such an extent that presently the lesson threatened to become a romp. Monsieur Dupre held up his hand for Miss Jane Fergusson, who presided at the harpsichord, to cease playing, then faced the class excitedly.

"Non, non," he expostulated, gesticulating as he talked. "'Tis not to romp. Zis is not Sir Roger de Coverly. 'Tis ze minuet. Ze most stately, ze most graceful, ze most dignified of all dances. Move slowly, gracefully. So! Ah, non, non! Not so queeckly, demoiselles! Nor so stiffly like ze pokaire. You haf seen Madame De Lancy? Emulate her. Ah, she hath ze grand mannaire. So! sink gently into ze profound courtesy. So!"

Kitty's dimples were coming and going, and her eyes were sparkling. The little man was so earnest with his bobbing and bowing; so funny as he gave his instructions in broken English that suddenly she laughed outright. There came a gasp of dismay from Miss Clementina, a titter from the girls, and the little man turned upon her like a flash.

"You are pleased to be merry, Mees Catherine," he said reprovingly. "Repeat, I beg of you, my instruction to ze class, and we shall see if attention you haf paid."

"Oui, monsieur," answered Kitty demurely, taking her position before the class, and drawing her small figure to its full height. "'Tis not to romp," she began, and an appreciative giggle ran through the class, for the girl was mimicking Monsieur Dupre's words and manner. "'Tis ze most stately, ze most graceful of all dances. Ah, non, non! Not queeckly, nor so stiffly like ze pokaire. You haf seen Madame De Lancy? Emulate her. So!" Grasping her blue camblet petticoat daintily with one hand, she threw the other coquettishly above her head, and sank with an exaggerated imitation of the teacher's manner into a deep courtesy.

The mimicry was so perfect that the merriment that convulsed the class burst forth in a ringing peal of laughter. The little rogue's eyes twinkled as she saw the effect that she had produced, and she bowed low to the dancing master.

"Is zat to your liking, monsieur?" she asked archly.

But there was no answering smile on monsieur's face. Instead there was a pained expression on his kindly countenance, and he stood regarding her sorrowfully.

"It gifs me great pleashaire to afford mademoiselle amusement," he said after a long moment of silence. "I will bid you bon jour, demoiselles." With a profound bow he turned, and left the room.

The laughter ceased abruptly, and the girls now sat looking at Kitty who stood with drooping head, shamed and confused by monsieur's words. She knew that it

was wrong to mimic the teacher, but she had not intended to pain the good monsieur; only to have a little fun, she told herself. Miss Clementina brought her sharply to a full realization of her offense.

" I am shocked and distressed that one of the pupils of my school should be guilty of such mockery," she said in an awful voice. " You will remain after the other pupils have gone, Catherine. I will deal with you then. Young ladies, prepare for dismissal."

Kitty heard her with dismay. Her brother Dirck had promised to take her for a row on the Collect, and to be kept in meant no row. She did want to go so much, so she plucked up courage to plead timidly:

" Please, good Miss Clementina, do not make me to stay to-day," she coaxed. " My brother hath promised to take me for a row on Fresh Water, and all the boys and girls of our ' Company ' are to go also. I am so sorry that I have been of such badness, but I have a foolishness to laugh and to mimic at times that I cannot help it. And that is the very truth."

" Had your conduct been other than it was you would not be obliged to remain after school," returned the lady sternly. " What would your grandmother say to such naughtiness? "

" Grandmother would say: ' Mein poppetje, for thy good is the school. Give heed to thy lessons, and observe well thy conduct. See now, thou must be a good kleintje,' " responded the little girl, her tones softening

into tenderness as she unconsciously assumed the voice and air of Madame Gerritt, her grandmother. Kitty was a born mimic. "And I would say, 'Ja, ja,'[1] Grandmother; such good words do thou speak, but this day thy little lambkin hath not heeded them. Naughty hath she been.' Then Grand ——"

"Catherine, how often must I tell you that this is an English school in an English Province? Wilt never learn that I wish to hear no language save that of the King whose subject you are?"

"But always we speak the Dutch at home," answered Kitty, stirred to unwonted rebellion. "You asked me what Grandmother would say, and I told you. Beside," she paused to draw a deep breath before giving utterance to a bold statement: "Beside, New York was not always an English Province. Once Dutch it was, called New Netherland, and the city was called New Amsterdam. So there!"

She drew up her tiny form as she flung her defiance, and stood regarding the teacher with flashing eyes. Despite the fact that a century had elapsed since the conquest of the colony by Great Britain, the Dutch families clung tenaciously to their language and customs, resisting as far as possible the encroachments of the English. On the whole the tendency of the two peoples had been toward amalgamation, but there were occasions when the latent animosity which had always

[1] Ja, the Dutch word for yes.

existed flared out. It was but the year before the opening of this story that the first sermon in English had been preached in the Middle Dutch Church, and its congregation were still unable to discuss the event with calmness. Our little maid belonged to one of the old families that still cherished the ways of the Vaderland, using the Dutch language in the home circle while perfectly familiar with that of the conqueror.

It was small cause for wonder then that Kitty was provoked into answering back Miss Clementina, but had her manner in making the statement, that New York had formerly been a Dutch Province instead of English, been more respectful her teacher might have overlooked her temerity in replying. As it was, Miss Clementina was amazed at the child, and, adjusting her bridge spectacles athwart her nose, gazed at the small culprit austerely. Little girls were expected to be seen and not heard; to submit to reproof or punishment without murmur or protest. Mischievousness and girlish pranks were of daily occurrence in the school, but disrespect such as Kitty had just shown was almost unknown. So for a long moment the spinster looked over her glasses before she spoke.

"Not another word, Catherine. You have not only been idle and discourteous to Monsieur Dupre, but saucy to me also. I am surprised at you. A full page of Mr. Smith's History of the City of New York shall you copy before you may go home. I am glad to see

that you have learned something from it regarding the history of the city. A further study of how the colony came to be English may not come amiss. When you have finished your task bring it to me. Such a land! The very air breathes sedition." By which it may be known that Mistress Clementina was a new arrival in the colony of New York.

Without another word the young girl went to the teacher's desk, and taking therefrom a large book bore it to her own desk, and opened it before her. It was the first volume of a History of New York City written by one Mr. William Smith, a prominent and esteemed citizen of the little town. Kitty knew him well, and his book was her pet aversion, for it was by no means the first time that she had been so punished.

"I wish," she mused mutinously, "that Mr. Smith had not writ about the City of New York. I shall ask Grandmother not to give him any of the quince conserve when next he comes to take a dish of tea with her. I see not why a city should be writ about anyway. Always there is my grandmother to tell me what happened long ago, and I like it best when she tells it."

Kitty Gerritt was a merry, warm-hearted little creature whose love of fun often carried her beyond bounds, but it was seldom that she went so far as upon this day. Miss Clementina had been heard to say that she was spoiled more than any child that she had ever known. There was truth in this statement, for Kitty's relatives

were very tender to her, permitting her to have her own way in a manner quite unusual with Dutch families; for, while lovingly indulgent to their children, the domestic discipline was strict. There were many reasons for relaxation in the case of Kitty; the chief one being that she and Dirck, her brother who was her senior by three years, were orphans.

Seven years before, during the French and Indian War, Joris Gerritt, the children's father, had shouldered a musket and gone with General Amherst to the Siege of Louisberg, leaving his young wife with their two little ones in his mother's charge. The English and Colonials had been victorious in the war, and all Canada had fallen into their hands, but Joris Gerritt was not among those who were left to rejoice at the victory. He was buried with the honors of war, and his young wife never rallied from the shock of his death. In a short time she too passed away, and Dirck and Kitty were left to the care of their grandmother; and a loving one it proved.

The whole household, consisting of Madame Gerritt, her son, Jacobus, and Cornelia, his wife, vied with each other in showering the little ones with attentions, of which Kitty, being the younger, received the major portion.

"The house she rules," Jacobus Gerritt was wont to declare. "Thou should see to it, Mother. Spoiled will the little one be."

"And thou art the chief offender, Jacobus," his mother would reply smilingly.

"Well then, if I am? The poor child hath no father, and who is to make up for her loss if not her uncle?"

It was the plea that excused everything. So it came about that Kitty's will was the pleasure of the family. At school it was but little better. The teachers and the pupils adored her for her sunny, merry disposition, and Miss Clementina, the preceptress, was often sore put to control her high spirits. So when she found that the little girl detested both history and writing, and that such tasks were more punishment than a birching would be, she rejoiced that such a weapon had been placed in her hands, and used it with what Kitty considered undue frequency. Indeed, so often did the punishment seem to be needed that it had become a source of amusement to Kitty's friends who often twitted her with writing a history of New York.

The bell on Trinity Church echoed the bell on the old Dutch Kirk in Garden Street in striking five o'clock when at length the task was finished. Carefully putting away inkhorn, powder and quill, Kitty made her best courtesy to Mistress Clementina, passed out of the schoolroom, and walked slowly down the stoop. Hoping that some of the girls had waited for her she glanced around eagerly, but not a girl was to be seen. She stood still when she reached the narrow footway of the

street undecided whether to go straight home, or to go to the store of her uncle where she was to have met her brother, Dirck.

"I can walk home with Uncle Jacobus if Dirck hath not waited for me," she soliloquized. "Perhaps some of the girls have gone there to tell why I could not come sooner. I would better go to the store. Yes; for sweets will Uncle Jacobus give me, though of a truth I deserve them not after being kept in. And naughty have I been this day." Kitty was candid regarding her faults. "It was for my good that Miss Clementina kept me. To-morrow I shall tell both her and Monsieur Dupre how sorry I am that I was so rude. Still monsieur did look funny when he capered about trying to be like Madame De Lancy. 'Twas the monkey that I saw on the Green at the King's Arms Tavern that he was like. Yes, the monkey that Uncle Jacobus took me to see last summer. So!"

Laughing gleefully she cast a roguish glance around to see that she was unobserved, then taking hold of the end of her capuchin[1] she dropped a courtesy to an imaginary partner, then began to prance about the footway with short, mincing steps. But alas! one of her little high-heeled shoes caught on a stone by the heel, and down she came in a heap.

"See now what hath befallen," she chided herself. A way she had when alone. "Grandmother would say

[1]A cloak made with a hood.

that it served me right. And she would tell me from The Book that, 'He that walketh uprightly walketh surely; but a prating fool shall fall.' Take heed, Kitty. Take heed!"

With this she picked herself up, and drawing her capuchin lightly about her turned sedately toward the east to Dock Street which led to Hanover Square. Dirck and she always chose this way to go to the store though it was not so short a route as by Duke Street which also led to the Square, but it afforded prospects of the river which both brother and sister liked.

The streets, which an hour earlier had been thronged with people, were now practically deserted. New York kept early hours at this time, and the business of the day was over. Clerks and apprentices of the shops and warehouses were putting boxes and barrels in safety, and closing the shutters for the night. It was a bustling, busy centre of the little city. Dock Street, Hanover Square and Queen Street being continuations of Pearl Street, which led to the Fort, formed the great artery of trade. From it the entire water-front on the Sound River was visible, and the walk was one of the most interesting in New York. In spite of Kitty's desire to reach the store quickly she could not but pause ever and anon to view the water; for she loved the wharves and the shipping.

In the bay near Nutten's Island[1] a large battle-ship

[1] Governor's Island.

was anchored. The *Dolphin* had entered the harbor only that morning, and the coming of one of the King's ships was always a notable event. A number of sloops, brigs and schooners, beside many smaller craft, lay off the wharves in the Sound River. Jacobus Gerritt had his own wharf, but the majority of the merchants used the city landings, or lightered their goods from ships in the stream, so that a goodly number of vessels were always to be seen.

It was the quietest hour of the day along the waterfront; for, wearied with the day's toil, men cared only for rest and a pipe, or to talk quietly while waiting for the early evening meal. Kitty was just entering the triangle which formed Hanover Square when all at once the sound of rapid footsteps broke the stillness. She turned curiously just as a sailor came running into the street from the direction of the river. He was an elderly man, she noted as he came toward her, his weather-beaten face and iron-gray hair proclaiming the fact, and by his attire was unmistakably an American seaman. After him a short distance came four British sailors, full tilt.

"Oh!" gasped Kitty, stopping stock still, her blue eyes wide with indignation. "'Tis the King's men, and they are after that poor sailor!"

CHAPTER II

KITTY GETS INTO TROUBLE

At the little girl's exclamation two men who were walking just ahead of her on the narrow footway turned to see what the trouble was. They too stopped when they saw the old seaman with the British sailors in pursuit. It took but little penetration to catch the situation. There was not a seaport in the colonies at this time that was not subjected to high-handed proceedings by the English navy. Captains of the men-of-war claimed the right to board colonial vessels and to take from them any number of men required to fill their quota; or, failing to do this, they did not hesitate to land and kidnap citizens for the service of the British navy. No little bitterness was engendered by such

press-gang methods, and every man, woman, and child (for the children reflected the views of their elders) resented the indignity of having American sailors, or citizens caught up forcibly from the streets and hurried aboard one of His Majesty's vessels.

In the summer of the year previous, New York had been stirred to its depths when four poor fishermen had been seized from their boats in the bay, and taken aboard a frigate at that time lying in the harbor. Only stern measures used by the Sons of Liberty had secured their release. The impressment of seamen was one of the acts in use by England that was bearing down upon her colonies to the limit of endurance. But seldom did the King's men proceed quite so boldly as they were doing on this particular afternoon.

Kitty had stopped in front of a general merchandise store to watch the affair, and her heart swelled with pity as she caught the look of despair on the old sailor's face as his pursuers gained on him.

"Oh, oh!" burst from her lips excitedly. "Can naught be done? The poor man!"

She glanced eagerly up and down the street hoping to see some of the Liberty Boys; but there was only a butcher boy driving his cart slowly toward the north, a few apprentices in leather aprons standing in the open doors of the shops, and the two men who stood a short distance from her. One of these men heard her exclamation, and turned to her.

"'Tis a great ado, lass," he agreed. "But what can be done anent the matter? For look you! The new Governor hath not yet arrived, and Lieutenant-Governor Colden hath no power over the men of the navy. He dare not act, and neither must we; though such things are getting beyond endurance. We ourselves would get into trouble."

Kitty heard his words with amazement. All her life she had been getting into trouble without thought of what might happen. Perhaps the fact that really serious consequences had never followed act of hers caused her surprise now at the man's words. Was he really afraid to help the sailor? She looked from him to the man standing beyond him, but he was nodding agreement to the first one's words. They were in very truth afraid, and they were grown men. Her lips curled scornfully, and she turned away from them with a disdainful toss of her head. If only Uncle Jacobus were there he would do something, she knew. When the poor fishermen were seized he had been very angry, and had declared that it was the duty of every colonist to oppose such measures by every means in his power. Naturally, the little maid expected that everyone would regard the matter as he did. That any man should differ from Uncle Jacobus proved that that man was unworthy of consideration; so scornfully Kitty turned her back upon these two.

By this time the British seamen had reached a point

in the street almost directly opposite to where she was standing. The American was still ahead, but the distance between him and his pursuers was but short. Kitty gave a wrathful look at the King's men, then turned sorrowfully away, unwilling to witness the capture of the old sailor. As she did so her eyes fell upon a row of empty casks standing at the edge of the narrow footway in readiness to be carted off, and a brilliant idea flashed into her mind. If the Englishmen were to be delayed maybe the old sailor could get away. Without a word she sprang forward, and rolled one of the casks out into the street directly in the way of the oncoming seamen.

A shout of laughter went up from the two bystanders and the watching apprentices as the foremost seaman ran into the cask, and sprawled his length over it. The other three being unable to check their momentum tumbled over him, and for a moment all four lay on the ground in a heap. Kitty jumped up and down, clapping her hands gleefully at their discomfiture, but as the sailors started to their feet the man who had spoken to her before said hastily:

"Run, little girl! Those fellows are apt to be ugly after this."

Kitty waited for no second bidding, but darted after the old sailor. He had seen what she had done, and now as she ran after him half paused as though to wait for her. She shook her head.

"Go on," she cried. "To the 'Sign of the Golden Key.' Uncle Jacobus will know what to do. Near the Meal Market."

The man nodded understandingly, and renewed his speed. A knowledge of reading was not general among the great mass of the people, so signs of all kinds were in common use to distinguish the stores from each other. The Sign of the Golden Key was Mr. Jacobus Gerritt's designation of his shop which specialized in hardware but dealt in general merchandise as well. As Kitty and her sailor passed the butcher boy in his cart, she was astonished to hear the latter call to her:

"Go on fast! See now, I'll help you." With this he began deliberately to crisscross the street in front of the irate British seamen who darted from side to side in the effort to pass beyond him.

Kitty nodded, and then sped on after the sailor. They were nearly to the upper end of the square now, and the great golden key of the counting-house loomed large before them. The building was of brick, three stories in height, with offices and wholesale department occupying the first floor which extended to the wharf in the rear. A slender, fair-haired youth of fifteen years whose resemblance to Kitty proclaimed him at once as her brother was putting up the shutters. He stared in amazement as his sister and her companion came running up to him.

"What made you so late, Kitty?" he cried. "And was it the history? Why! what hath happened?"

"Uncle Jacobus? Where is he?" gasped the girl.

"In the office. What's the matter?"

Kitty pointed over her shoulder at the seamen who had succeeded in getting ahead of the boy and his cart, and were nearly upon them.

"Keep them out, Dirck. They are trying to take this man."

Dirck Gerritt's lips broadened into a smile of understanding, and he faced the British sailors joyously as Kitty ran on into the counting-house with her sailor. Like all American boys of Dutch descent he was intensely Whiggish in feeling, and welcomed anything that would serve as a pretext for circumventing a high-handed proceeding of the King's men.

The clerks had gone for the night, and there was but one man in the main room of the counting-house: a country merchant, in broad-rimmed hat and homespun clothes, who had been weighing, inspecting, tasting and purchasing goods, and who was now awaiting Mr. Gerritt to go home with him for supper. He gave Kitty a glance of mild amazement as she made her unceremonious entrance, but the little maid dashed on into the private office of her uncle with but a passing look in his direction, the old sailor following closely after her.

Jacobus Gerritt was a typical New York merchant

of the period, bearing the mark of his Holland ancestry full upon him. He was large in frame, ruddy of countenance, but his face was frank and strong, and his steel-gray eyes held sweetness as well as firmness. His grandfather, Dirck Gerritt, had come over when Petrus Stuyvesant was Governor of New Amsterdam by grace of the West India Company. He rose from his seat before a desk as Kitty and the sailor burst through the door.

"Uncle Jacobus," cried the little girl breathlessly, "the King's men are after this poor sailor. I brought him to you. Oh, don't let them get him!"

"Are you a deserter?" questioned Jacobus Gerritt, his calm in great contrast to Kitty's excitement.

"No, sir; no. I'm from the *Charming Sally,* a Boston sloop loaded with salt mackerel, moored at Cruger's Wharf. I'm on shore leave. The cargo's for Mr. Adolph Phillipse. He can tell you that I am Manhattan born."

Jacobus nodded, and pointed toward a door leading to an inner room.

"Well then," he said, "I will see what can be done. Go in there, my friend. Sit down, my child. Thou art tired."

Kitty sank into a chair with a sigh of relief. Everything would be all right now, she was sure, since Uncle Jacobus had the matter in hand, but the sailor hesitated.

"There may be dirty weather ahead, sir," he said.

"Maybe I had better wait until the squall blows over?"

"Well, that was so," agreed Mr. Gerritt. "But wait not. If help we need I will call. Go in."

"Ay, ay, sir," answered the old salt obediently. He saluted, and entered the inner room as Jacobus turned toward the outer apartment.

It was evident that his presence was needed, for there was a noise of scuffling, and cries and shouts of men. Above the din Kitty heard her brother's voice:

"Uncle Jacobus! Uncle Jacobus, come quick."

With a bound Jacobus Gerritt reached the door, and passed through. Kitty sprang up, unable to remain seated while something might be happening to Dirck. Running to the door she peeped out. The British seamen were in the room, one of whom was holding her brother back against the wall, while the visiting merchant was engaged in a tussle with another. Her uncle's huge form opposed the further advance of the other two.

"Well, gentlemen," he said placidly. "What is it that you want? Goods of all kinds will you find upstairs. Osnaburgs and fustians; jew's harps too that will pipe as merry a hornpipe as ever sailor lad danced to. Goods of all sorts will I sell you up to the limit of forty shillings; more, as you know, you are not permitted to spend with us. 'Tis after hours, but for the King's men will I open mine shop. What shall it be?"

"We don't want any of your goods, you vile Dutch-

man," came from one who was evidently the leader. "We want that sailor who ran in here with that girl. We want him for the King's service, and we are going to have him too."

"And is it with the King's sanction that his men enter the buildings of his subjects without warrant? I think not. What right of search have you? The matter shall be carried to Lieutenant-Governor Colden."

"The Governor hath no jurisdiction over the navy," answered the spokesman haughtily. "We recognize no authority save that of the ship's officers when at sea. Enough of this parley. We want that man. Without force, if possible; but with force, if necessary."

"So? Well then, come and take him. But first, take your hands, sirrah, off that boy."

Jacobus looked so fierce as he said this, and made such a threatening gesture with his great fists that the sailor who had hold of Dirck loosed his grasp involuntarily. Then, as though ashamed of his easy compliance, reached out again for the lad who ducked under his arm, and ran to his uncle's side. At the same moment, the merchant who had been tussling with another of the seamen now tightened his grip, and glanced around at Mr. Gerritt.

"I think we can manage it, Jacobus," he remarked placidly.

For an instant the leader of the sailors gazed at the set, determined faces of the two men.

"At them, mates," he yelled suddenly. "We are four to three, and one of them a boy. Dan'll help me with the big Dutchman."

He leaped toward Jacobus Gerritt as he finished speaking, but the latter caught him as he flung himself upon him, grasping him about the body in a way that pinned the seaman's arms to his side. And then began a wrestling match that became one of brute strength, for the fellow was no mean antagonist even for Jacobus Gerritt. Neither seemed able to obtain the mastery. Sway as he would Jacobus failed immediately to drive him to the floor. The play of the trip was made entirely by the sailor whose attempts to interlock were frustrated by Jacobus with a jerk that sent the man's leg back "to brace." Dirck and the visiting merchant had their hands full, being engaged with their original assailants, while Kitty stood spellbound by the spectacle of human strength in battle.

Suddenly she noticed with a thrill of fear that the fourth sailor was stealing upon Jacobus from the rear. At that moment there came a quick change of position, a lightning-like shifting of hands and legs, and the feet of the sailor flew into the air while his body shot over Jacobus's shoulder, landing heavily, back down, upon the floor.

Before it had fairly settled the fourth sailor had flung himself upon Mr. Gerritt, who staggered back at the unexpected onset, but he turned in time to meet the charge

breast on, though at a great disadvantage. The two were instantly locked in a close embrace. Together they tottered over the floor, but Kitty saw that her uncle was surely gaining the mastery. All at once the fellow loosed his hold, made a clutch at his belt, then flung his right arm aloft with an exclamation of triumph. The little girl screamed in terror as she caught the glitter of a knife in his hand, and, scarcely conscious of what she was doing, seized a counting stool, swung it high above her head, then brought it down with all the force of her tiny form upon the man's arm. The impact of the blow knocked the weapon to the floor, his arm dropped to the fellow's side, and with an ejaculation of pain he clasped it with his left hand. Jacobus flung him off with an exclamation of contempt.

"'Tis murder you want, and that is the truth, my friend. In a fair fight between men the fist only should be used. A coward you are." Then catching sight of Dirck who seemed to be getting the worst of the encounter with his sailor he reached over and lifted the man from the boy.

"Soh!" he cried with scorn. "Cowards are you all! To assail a lad of half your years and weight is poor business. Are all the King's men such wights?"

But Dirck arose from the floor half crying. "You should not have interfered, Uncle Jacobus," he cried. "I know that I could have whipped him in the end.

He was ahead just for the minute. He'd just got me down. In truth, he had."

"Have be, Dirck. A good account of thyself didst thou give, but 'tis enough for one day. Ah, Mr. Van Brun! thou too hast done well."

"There is no need to grieve over the end of the frisk, Jacobus," returned the visiting merchant modestly. With manifest reluctance he got up from his position astride the sailor whom he had worsted in the struggle. "I think the King's men will take heed into what house they venture without warrant."

"I think so too," agreed Jacobus. "Well, friends, have you enough had?"

Three of the sailors rose angrily. The fourth, whose arm Kitty had struck, stood regarding the group with dark looks and lowering brows. From the aspects of the seamen it seemed as though the mêlée was like to break out again when there came a quiet voice from the doorway:

"Quite a little broil, Mr. Gerritt, I perceive. With none too gentle an ending from appearances. Need any help?" A tall man followed the voice into the store, and stood regarding Jacobus with a quizzical glance. The latter answered him jovially:

"No, Mr. Willett. 'Tis but a small cargo that we have been dressing for the King. Soh, men?"

The sailors made no reply, but turned sullen looks upon the newcomer. The name of Marinus Willett was

becoming well known as a leader of the Liberty Boys, and his appearance was not welcomed by them. The spokesman whirled around hastily as he met the stern glance of the Whig.

"We are beaten, mates," he cried. "Come on!" He made for the door followed closely by the others. On the threshold the man whom Kitty had struck paused, and faced them.

"I am not through with you," he said threateningly. "As for you," scowling darkly at Kitty, "it will be your turn next."

"But why?" asked Kitty, opening wide her blue eyes. She feared no one when Uncle Jacobus stood by. "Why should you want me? A ship I could not sail." And she laughed.

At his words Jacobus Gerritt gave a roar, and sprang toward the fellow. A threat of harm to Kitty he would not stand, but the man had leaped across the threshold before he could reach him, and, followed by his fellows, ran down the street. Mr. Willett laid a detaining hand upon Jacobus's arm.

"Go not after them, Jacobus," he advised him gravely. "'Twere best to let the matter end now."

And reluctantly Mr. Gerritt gave up the chase.

CHAPTER III

KITTY GAINS A TITLE

"THE King's men grow unbearable, Marinus," remarked Mr. Gerritt as he picked up the knife of the sailor from the floor. "We are his subjects no less than they, yet because we are Colonials every indignity is put upon us. See now this knife? But for this little white lambkin even now Jacobus Gerritt might be weltering in his blood. Are not the Stamp and the Quartering Acts enough that we must submit to every Jack Tar's whim and caprice? 'Tis beyond endurance, and that is the truth."

"It is, Jacobus," agreed Mr. Willett gravely. "There will be much matter for the Colonial Congress to discuss when it meets next week. A house invaded in New York means a like act in the Carolinas, or Vir-

ginia, or Massachusetts. What touches one touches all. And now to the matter in hand. Unravel the cause of the broil, I pray you."

"Dirck, bring the old seaman from the inner office while Kitty tells us of the happening. Be seated, Mr. Willett. And thou also, Hermann Van Brun. Now, my child!" With this he took Kitty upon his knee and the others gathered about them. "This day didst thou save me, sweetheart," he said, kissing the little maid tenderly. "See what blood will do, Marinus. Her great-grandfather fought with the English in 1660, and again in 1672; her father went to the war with the French in 1758, and now in 1765 she saves her uncle from the knife of an English sailor. True it is that blood will tell."

"He wished to hurt thee, and bear that I could not," declared she, clasping her arms about his neck. "Thou dear uncle!"

"And now the story from the beginning," commanded Jacobus as Dirck entered with the old sailor.

Briefly Kitty related the chase of the seaman, and how she had upset the King's men with the cask. There was some laughter at this, but the men's brows darkened as the old sailor told his side of the matter. Hate of British oppression was growing rapidly, and this latest proceeding but added to the fires already smouldering. The obnoxious Stamp Act was to go into effect the first of the coming month, and now a man was all but seized openly in the streets in broad daylight. Where would

the matter end? Therefore, their countenances grew set and stern at the recital.

"It must be seen what can be done," observed Jacobus when the old sailor had made an end of his tale. "Where will you be safe, my friend? They will be watching to take you."

"With my mates at Kiersted's Tavern on the New Dock," answered the old tar quickly. "But even if I am taken, I must not stay here to bring more trouble upon you and the little skipper. It was by her orders I came."

Both Mr. Gerritt and Mr. Willett laughed.

"Orders to all of us does Kitty give," announced Jacobus, regarding his niece with pride. "All her life hath she ordered us about without mercy. All of us: her friends as well as her kinsmen."

"And I wouldn't want to ship under a better capting," declared the sailor earnestly. "Her wit hath carried me into a safe harbor when I might have been at this very minute on the deck of His Majesty's frigate, the *Dolphin*. But I'll be going now, sir; and thank ye kindly for what ye have done."

"My friends and I will see you to the tavern," declared the merchant rising. "I speak for all?" he questioned, throwing a quick glance from Mr. Willett to Mr. Van Brun. "If it be that the man will be safe there, 'tis but right that we see that he reaches his mates in safety. So?"

"That we will, Jacobus," came the answer in hearty tones from the other two men.

"Then will we be about it," said Mr. Gerritt briskly. "Dirck, my boy, take your sister home, and tell Mother that late for supper will Mr. Van Brun and I be. You will sup with us, Marinus?"

"Nay, Jacobus; not to-night. There will be a meeting of the Sons of Liberty in the long room at Burns's Tavern and I would be present. Another time will I come, and gladly. But do you go with the children. I liked not what the fellow said to the little girl."

A troubled look flashed into Mr. Gerritt's eyes.

"You do not think that harm he meant to the little one?" he asked quickly.

"I know not, Jacobus," said Mr. Willett soberly, "but it is the part of wisdom to be careful."

"Right you are, and I will do as you say." Jacobus shook hands with him warmly. "Have no fear to go with him, my friend," he said, addressing the sailor. "He is one of the Sons of Liberty who are bound together to protect citizens from oppression. He will see that you in safety the tavern reach. He, and this friend also."

"Ay, ay, sir! and glad I'll be of their company," exclaimed the sailor. Going up to Kitty he began scraping and bowing. "Good-bye, little capting," he said. "Old Ben'll never forget what you have done for him this day."

"Good-bye," spoke Kitty shyly, overwhelmed by his gratitude. "I don't like the King's men very well; they are so cruel. I do hope that they won't ever get you."

"If they try it, I'll send for you, Capting Kitty," returned he smiling.

"Captain Kitty," chuckled Jacobus as the whole party began to laugh. "That is good! Very good! Come, Dirck, let's take the skipper home before further she embroils us with the navy."

Dirck caught Kitty by the arm as they all started for the street. "I'm going to call you Captain all the time," he said. "And I'm going to tell the 'Company' how brave you've been to help this poor sailor."

"Was it brave, Dirck? I knew it not. I only wanted to keep the King's men from getting him. See now, how many have gathered, and when they were needed none were in sight."

There was in truth quite a number of people in front of the counting-house, drawn hither by the news that something untoward was occurring. They were, for the most part, apprentices, clerks, and longshoremen with a few citizens among them. Some of these latter accosted Mr. Gerritt eagerly to learn what had happened, while Mr. Willett and Mr. Van Brun, flanking the old sailor on each side, started at once in the direction of the water-front. The brother and sister waited for a time, but presently began to walk on slowly, turning

into Wall Street and going westward toward the Broad Way. All at once Kitty burst out laughing.

"Dirck," she gasped, "why in the world are you acting in so funny a way?"

"I am reconnoitring," answered the boy, who was peering ahead and around in fearsome fashion. "You heard what that fellow said? Well then, he shall not get you while I am with you."

"So much do you fear for me?" asked Kitty sweetly. "Perchance he would not keep me even though he did get me. Miss Clementina would not. So troublesome am I."

"Was it then for some badness that you were kept this afternoon, Kitty? I waited and waited for you; then told the boys and girls to go on without us. It must have been fine on Fresh Water to-day."

"Yes," assented Kitty. "That was so; it must have been. I had from that old history to copy again, Dirck. And then when Miss Clementina asked me what Grandmother would say to my mocking the dancing master, and I told her, she scolded me for using Dutch. But how could I tell her what Grandmother would say without using it?"

Dirck laughed. He knew his sister's propensity to mimicry too well not to understand how Kitty had told it.

"*You* couldn't, Kitten," he said. "Was that all?"

"No; I told her that New York had not always been

an English Colony. That once it was Dutch when the city was called New Amsterdam, and the Province was New Netherland. She said that I was disrespectful, but I said naught but truth, Dirck. How then could I be disrespectful?"

"Perchance it was not what you said, but the way in which you said it, Kitten. I don't believe that Miss Clementina would mind such a statement of fact if you had said it in the proper manner. Now wasn't that the way of it?"

"Well then, Dirck, that is the truth. I was naughty." And Kitty hung her head.

Dirck laughed.

"I thought so. Here we are at the City's House where the big meeting is to be held next week."

Dirck stopped as he spoke under the covered way of the entrance to the City Hall, for they had reached the northeast corner of Nassau and Wall Streets by this time. Wall Street was a place of residences as well as of trade, and as Mr. Gerritt proceeded slowly after them he delayed occasionally to exchange greetings with people sitting on the stoops. Indeed in all the principal streets of the city the eye was struck by this intimate association of merchants' stores, lawyers' offices, mechanics' workshops and fashionable residences, so that Wall Street was not unique in this respect. In the olden time a "wall," or stockade, had been erected along its northern line for the protection of the settlement

which gave the name to the thoroughfare at its base. The City's House was built at the head of Broad Street, facing the southwest. Kitty glanced up at the strong, brick building, oblong in shape with a wing at each end, before asking:

"What meeting, Dirck? One of the courts?"

For the Hall served as Municipal and Colonial Court House as well as Debtors' Prison, County Jail, and Capitol of the Province.

"No." The boy spoke with slow impressiveness. "It is to be a meeting of men from every one of the colonies, Kitten. Didn't you hear Mr. Willett say that the Congress would have plenty to discuss when it met? Well then, it was the meeting that is to be held in this very Hall that he meant. It is the first time that men from all the colonies have met together, and it's going to be a big thing. There are to be delegates from every one of the Provinces, and the meeting is to be held right here. Uncle Jacobus told me all about it. There are to be some 'Big Whigs' among the delegates, I hear."

"Will Uncle Jacobus meet with them, Dirck?"

"Why, of course. They couldn't get along without him. Mr. Cruger, and Mr. Bayard, and Mr. Livingston are going to attend too. I'm going to see every one of them."

"Oh, Dirck! couldn't I see them too? And all the boys and girls of the 'Company' also? We would like it."

"Managed it might be," observed the lad with the air of one who had the entire matter in charge. "I will see. I wonder if I could get a book now! I told Uncle Jacobus to get it for me this morning but he forgot it."

"Let me see the time," cried Kitty, running out into the street so that she could see the face of the clock on the Hall. "It's after hours, but sometimes the keeper stays. Shall we wait for Uncle Jacobus to go with us?"

"No; we will have to hurry if we get in at all. He will just about reach here by the time we come down. Come on, Kitten."

The little girl waved a hand to her uncle, then ran after her brother into the building. The Hall in addition to being the place of courts and assemblies was also the repository of the Library. The Corporation had had a number of books presented to it, and later what was known as the "Society Library" was installed by some public-spirited citizens, that reading might be more generally diffused and a knowledge of polite literature be inculcated among the people. These books could be taken from the room by subscribers; non-subscribers were required to make a deposit.

The library was in the Council Room in the west wing of the building on the second floor. The eastern wing contained the Assembly Chamber, a Lobby and a small room for the Speaker of the House. The space between the wings was devoted to the Supreme Court. The

Custodian of the books came to meet them as brother and sister entered the room.

" 'Tis after hours, Master Dirck," he said. " But of course if it's anything pressing, I might stretch a point or two in your favor."

" It's most important," Dirck told him promptly. " I want to get The Adventures of Robinson Crusoe by Mr. Defoe. Brandt Van Eyssel hath a copy, and I'd like to read the book too. His came by the last packet from his mother's sister in England. It's considered à la mode to be conversant with it. I'd like it. It's fine what I have seen of it." Dirck's grandiloquent manner gave way abruptly to boyish enthusiasm.

" Yes; it's fine, Master Dirck," agreed the custodian of the books laughing. " It's a book that all lads like, but we have it not. Perchance you might find a copy for sale at Mr. Hugh Gaines' bookshop. He hath many volumes that are pleasing to the young, and I dare say that will be found among them. By the way! tell your uncle that Mr. William Smith hath at length completed the second volume of his History of New York City. It is already at the printer's in London, I hear. I make no doubt but that we shall have it soon."

" Oh! " came from Kitty in a tone of such consternation that her brother laughed.

" See what lies before you, Kitten," he teased as they started down the stairs. " You will be as learned as Governor Colden's daughter, Miss Jane, before you are

ended with those two volumes of history. So bad you are!"

"But I'm going to be good," declared the little maiden vigorously. "So good that never again shall I have to stay after school. And yet," she added abruptly as though the idea had just occurred to her, "see what would have happened had I been good to-day? That poor sailor would have been seized by the King's men. What a puzzle it doth make, Dirck. I should be good, and yet if good I had been it would have gone hard with the sailor. What shall be done about it?"

"Don't bother, Kitten." The boy gave her hand a squeeze. "You are good just as you are. At least Uncle Jacobus, and Grandmother, and Aunt Cornelia, and I think so."

"Still," protested Kitty, "Miss Clementina thinks that there is 'room for improvement,' Dirck. It may be that I should be better. I shall ask Grandmother. She will know."

At this juncture they turned into the Broad Way, and entering that pleasant thoroughfare crossed over to the Mall, as the walk in front of Trinity Church was called. The church-bell struck the half hour of six, and Kitty gave a little gasp.

"So late we are, Dirck. Whatever will Grandmother think? She likes not to have the supper kept waiting, nor does Aunt Cornelia. Spoiled will the victuals be. Come, my brother, let us hurry."

"Grandmother will not mind when she hears what hath kept us, Kitty," replied the youth, but he quickened his steps nevertheless.

The Gerritt home stood on the west side of the Broad Way, half-way between Trinity Church and the Bowling Green, overlooking the wide Parade where Fashion came of an afternoon to idle an hour or two under the wide-spreading trees. The house was large, two stories and a garret high, and had a doubly-sloping roof pierced with dormer windows. It was built of buff-colored brick imported from Holland; a needless expense, Jacobus Gerritt was wont to declare, because brick making was one of the earliest and most successful industries of the new land. The lower windows and wide front door of the mansion were framed with carved woodwork, painted white. It did not follow the Dutch custom of standing with the gable end toward the street, but opened from the centre of the front directly upon the highway. Large grounds stretched from the sides and rear of the building to the river, and in them lay the orchards and the gardens. Herbs, simples and berries were not wanting in them; for all good housewives at this period were expected to be able to treat colds and the lesser maladies with simples, and to provide abundantly jams, jellies, and conserves of various kinds.

In the summer time there were many flowers in the fancifully shaped beds that were bordered by clipped

yews and hollies whose fantastic shapes were in the mode of the time. There were but few blossoms now among the dying flowers in the beds, but the red cheeks of apples flamed among the russet leaves of the trees, and great yellow pears displayed their tempting lusciousness. A small Gothic summer-house stood near the centre of the gardens looking toward the pleasant prospect of the Jersey shore. It was very Dutch, and very pleasant.

The upper half of the front door stood open, and a lady was leaning on the lower half. She came through the door quickly as brother and sister ran up the steps of the stoop. She was unusually tall, moving with stately grace, and the snow-white cap of clear starched lace that crowned her head was not whiter than her snow-white hair. Her dress of black taffetas was open in front, and looped up in the back in order to show an elaborately quilted petticoat of camblet. Her white wool stockings were clocked, her high-heeled shoes cut very low and clasped with silver buckles. Over her gown she wore an apron of blue chintz with wide bands fastened over the shoulders. She was the children's grandmother, and they thought no other lady quite so fine as she. The English called her Madame Gerritt in accordance with their custom of so addressing a woman of standing and property; the Dutch, Mevrouw.[1] Her dark eyes beamed a welcome as the children came to her,

[1] Mevrouw—Mrs. or Madame. Pronounced Meffrow.

and she drew Kitty to her with a kiss. At this Dirck caught her round the waist.

"Two for me, Grandmother," he cried. "I have not seen thee since two of the clock."

"And why art thou so late, little son?" she asked, giving him the two kisses with tenderness. In Patria the Dutch do not address each other in affectionate intercourse, as the French and Germans do. But in cosmopolitan New York contact with other nationalities had modified the formality of the Hollander, and he used the "thee" and "thou" lovingly in the family circle. "Long hath the supper waited. And where are Jacobus and Mynheer Van Brun?"

"Uncle Jacobus is coming, Grandmother. See! he is up the street. So much hath happened," cried Kitty before Dirck could speak. "I was kept after school, and a poor sailor was chased by the King's men, and Uncle Jacobus fought them, and Mr. Van Brun, and then came Mr. Willett; so here we are at last."

"Jacobus fought Hermann Van Brun and Mr. Willett?" exclaimed the good lady in bewilderment. "Why, they are not unfriends! Why should they fight?"

"Oh, no, Grandmother; he fought the King's men. Thou must tell of it, Dirck."

And Dirck told of the happening with all the relish of youth which delights in the give and take of battle. Madame Gerritt heard him thoughtfully. By the

time the recital was ended Jacobus was ascending the stoop.

"Thou art welcome, my son," said his mother. "Dirck hath just finished telling of the happening. Will Hermann Van Brun be here soon?"

"I think so, Mother. Had we not better wait for him?"

"Yes; the supper will not spoil for a time longer. I will speak to Cornelia saying that hot it must be kept. A good meal must all have after so much action. Come, little one, and tell Grandmother why thou wast kept after school."

CHAPTER IV

KITTY AT HOME

KITTY linked her arm within that of her grandmother's as they passed through the hall where tall mahogany chairs stood dark against the whitewashed walls. She always told her of any naughtiness of which she had been guilty, so now she began at once:

"Sadly provoked was Mistress Clementina with me to-day, Grandmother. I fear that I tried her greatly. First: I was idle. It was so warm in the schoolroom that work I could not. And then I was rude in manner to Miss Clementina. At least Dirck thinks that 'twas my manner."

"My child, rude to thy teacher?"

"Yes; so naughty have I been. But before that I mocked the dancing master, Monsieur Dupre. 'Twas

in the minuet. So slow was the dance, Grandmother, that we girls tried to make it more lively. Monsieur liked it not.

"'Tis not to romp, demoiselles,' he said. You should have seen his hands fly about, Grandmother; he was so excited." Kitty became at once the dapper little French teacher. "Then he told us to be like Madame De Lancy, and showed us what he called her 'grand mannaire.' So! but 'twas more like the monkey at the King's Arms Tavern that Uncle Jacobus took me to see than Madame De Lancy. I laughed, Grandmother."

"Kitty! you did not?"

"Yes. But there is more, dear Grandmother. He asked me to repeat his instruction to the class to show that I had heard him. This I did, but I mocked his very manner and used his words. He was angry. Oh very! He looked at me a long time, and then said that he was pleased that he could give me amusement. You see, Grandmother, the girls all laughed so that monsieur went away without finishing the lesson. For this Miss Clementina made me to stay after school, and to copy from Mr. Smith's history."

"Miss Clementina was right, Kitty. For see now! It was unkind to the good mynheer. And rude. His best was he trying to teach thee what thou wast sent to learn, and thou didst mock him. It is right to have fun, but not, my lambkin, when it hurts another.

Grandmother wishes thee to be merry and happy, but she does not wish her little one to be thoughtless or inconsiderate of others. To-morrow then thou shalt take two fine apples from the tree of Baldwins by the summer-house which thou shalt give to Mynheer Dupre. And sorrow for thy naughtiness must thou express to him. And no more, Kitty, must thou so do. No; nor must thou be rude to any of thy teachers. It is wrong. Very! Was this all?"

"No, Grandmother. To Miss Clementina was I rude also. At least my brother thinks I must have been. Hear then what I said to her." Whereupon the little girl related her remark to the schoolmistress, and the lady's rejoinder.

"It was as thy brother said, Kitty. It was in thy manner that she was offended. Thou must do better, my child."

"I will, dear Grandmother," spoke Kitty contritely. "Miss Clementina did well to punish me; but do, Grandmother, please to entreat Mr. Smith to write no more histories of New York. The keeper of the books at the Hall said that soon another volume was to be had. It is already at the printer's in London, and he makes no doubt but that soon it will be in this city. So thick, so very thick is the one at school." She sighed.

Madame Gerritt's lips twitched as she heard the sigh, but she merely remarked:

"It would be better to be a good child, and then how

many volumes he writes would concern thee not. Is it not so?"

"Yes, Grandmother. That is the truth, and I will try to be good," promised Kitty gravely.

They had reached the kitchen by this time. It was a large room, raftered and with tiled floor. Substantial plenty and free-hearted hospitality were indicated in its every feature from the black pot hanging from the crane in the large fireplace to the opposite end of the room where a tall dresser proudly sustained its weight of polished pewter. A small woman, fresh faced and rosy cheeked, stepped briskly about directing the movements of two negro women engaged in dishing up the evening meal. Her house dress, consisting of a gay, quilted skirt, short enough to display her fancifully clocked hose and low shoes with silver buckles, dark bodice and white apron, was in strong contrast to the picturesque garb of the negresses whose gaudy turbans, short gowns and petticoats of green linsey-woolsey gave a play of color that would have delighted the heart of Rembrandt. The small woman was Cornelia, Jacobus's wife. Her face lighted up at sight of her mother-in-law and niece, and she cried gayly:

"'Tis time thou art come, Kitten," using Dirck's name for his sister. "And is Jacobus come also? And Hermann Van Brun? Full long hath the supper waited, and naught spoils good food so much as waiting."

"Stay the women, Cornelia," spoke Madame Gerritt. "Jacobus is here, but Hermann Van Brun is delayed by a political matter. Keep the food warm a little longer until he comes."

"Mother, spoiled will it be; and the blacks, as thou must know, have other work to do. Foolish it is to delay a meal for politics."

"A bidden guest is Hermann Van Brun, Cornelia. Therefore, we can do naught but wait."

Cornelia Gerritt sighed as she bade the negro women to place the food where it would keep warm. The Dutch women were noted for their housewifery, and none held a higher repute than Jacobus Gerritt's wife for a well-served meal cooked to a nicety. A famous housewife is cut to the quick when one of her meals is spoiled; therefore Cornelia sighed. Kitty spoke impulsively, hoping to soothe regret.

"Bad it is for the supper, dear Aunt Cornelia, but Mr. Van Brun went with a poor sailor to keep the King's men from getting him. 'Tis just to the New Dock that he went. The Sign of the Pineapple, which is Mr. Kierstede's Tavern, as thou knows. Mr. Willett went also, and such a time as we have had. Why, do ——"

"Kitty, I think I hear Hermann now. Wilt run back to the stoop to see if he hath come? Then thou shalt tell thy aunt all that hath happened: of thy school, of the sailor and the fray," interrupted Madame Ger-

ritt. "It may be that even now Hermann is with Jacobus. Sad indeed would it be should one of Cornelia's good suppers spoil. Oppression cannot be fought on empty stomachs. The men should think of such things, and have regard for the order of the household. See now if all are here. And quickly!"

Kitty sped back through the passageway and the hall to the stoop, where, sure enough, both Mr. Willett and Mr. Van Brun were standing with her uncle and Dirck. They seemed excited over something, and were clustered about a newspaper which Marinus Willett was holding.

"What is it, Dirck?" she whispered, drawing the boy a little apart from the men.

Dirck, who had been listening eagerly, turned with a start.

"It's a new paper, Kitten. Just issued to tell what the people think of the Stamp Act. 'Tis called *The Constitutional Courant,* and it hath the device of a rattlesnake in pieces on the front page, bearing the motto, 'Join or die.'"

"What does that mean, my brother?"

"Mr. Willett says that it means that like the snake the colonies can't exist without they stick together. Listen, Kitten. He's talking. We don't want to miss what he is saying."

"We must stick together if we accomplish anything,"

said Marinus Willett. "One stick is easily broken; a bundle of sticks can neither be bent nor broken."

"And the supper, Dirck? They have forgotten all about it," exclaimed the little girl, mindful of Aunt Cornelia's nice supper spoiling over the fire. "I must tell her that they have come."

But Madame Gerritt came at this moment through the door.

"Thou art welcome, Hermann Van Brun," she said, giving him her hand. "Mr. Willett, thou must honor us with thy presence at supper. Come, Jacobus! Cornelia hath waited long, and she likes not for her meals to stand. All of you must be hungry. We can talk as we eat."

"That was so," agreed Jacobus. "Come, Mr. Willett."

"My own supper will be waiting, Jacobus. Thank you, Madame Gerritt, but my wife does not like waiting any more than does Cornelia, and I have delayed o'erlong to-night. My peace I must make with her, for there is a meeting at Burns's Tavern of the Liberty Boys which I wish to attend. And so good-night."

"Good victuals should not spoil though all go wrong with the government," remarked Madame Gerritt as Mr. Willett ran down the steps laughing. "Politics is all that is thought of by the men nowadays."

"Indeed that is the truth, Mother, and sad cause have the King and his Parliament given us to talk of

them. But come! I make no doubt but that all are hungry."

With this the family and their guest entered the hall, passed through the drawing-room to the great room where the meals were served. It was separated from the drawing-room by glass doors, and the eye was struck on entering by the number of tables that it contained. The large oval mahogany dining-table was the principal piece of furniture in the room, the smaller tables being used for tea and serving-tables, and a long, narrow one was called a Chippendale sideboard. The hangings at the windows and the cushions of the high-backed chairs were of russet, matching the green canvas floor covering in coloring. The fireplace was impressive with its deep hearth framed in tiles of Scriptural subjects, and held promise of the cheer of an open fire later on. There were several glazed pictures on the walls, two landscapes, or landskips as they were called: one, a view in Flanders; the other, a view in Amsterdam; beside cabinets filled with Delft ware, china, silver, and glass. The whole formed an attractive apartment, typical of a New York home of the period.

For New Yorkers of means had every opportunity to furnish their homes handsomely. Every vessel brought the newest articles in furniture and ornament from London, and anyone who took pride in living in the best taste could easily keep up with European fashions.

Jacobus and his guest did full justice to Aunt Cor-

nelia's nice supper which, after all, had not suffered by the standing, yet Kitty noticed with some wonder that they ate as though scarcely conscious of what they were doing. For the talk went on. Men of the day were deeply stirred by the events that were taking place, and it was, in truth, the beginning of most critical times in the colonies.

Up to the year 1764 the colonies cherished a deep reverence and affection for the mother country, but the ignorance and folly of the English Government changed this feeling into one of abhorrence. For England ruled her American Colonies harshly for the benefit of English commerce. America was not allowed to export her products except to England. No foreign ship might enter American ports. Woolen goods were not allowed to be sent from one colony to another. Iron works were forbidden. The manufacture of hats, or other articles, was limited, and the Bible was not permitted to be printed anywhere in the colonies.

In addition to all this, the Stamp and Quartering Acts were passed. The Stamp Act provided that no marriage licenses, lawsuits, or mercantile transactions were legal unless written on stamped paper. The Billeting Act provided that every American home should receive its quota of soldiers and bear the expense of their maintenance. Truly, as Marinus Willett had said, there was much matter to be discussed by a Congress of the Colonies.

And Dirck and Kitty sat listening to all the talk. Young people were not expected to join in the conversation when their elders were conversing, but like all children of the period they knew everything that was happening, and held strong opinions as to what should be done anent the differences with the King.

But after the supper things were cleared away the children's turn came, for then Aunt Cornelia played on the spinet while they sang. Music being an accomplishment of fashion, and Dirck being possessed of a fine tenor voice, Jacobus had insisted upon its cultivation. Then both boy and girl swooped down upon their uncle, and led him to the settle snuggling down beside him in its capacious depths, begging for the nightly story. Jacobus turned apologetically to Mr. Van Brun.

"A little while excuse us, Hermann," he said. "A story must the lambkins have every night before they go to bed. Then the whole evening will we have without these little pitchers to hear our words." And he pinched the children's ears playfully. "Whose turn is it to choose the story?"

"Dirck's," answered Kitty. "I chose Rebecca at the Well last night."

"Well, then Dirck shall choose to-night. Which shall it be, Dirck?"

Dirck walked to the wide-throated fireplace and looked at the blue tiles surrounding it carefully. The tiles were illustrations of Scriptural subjects, and fur-

nished themes for many stories. The Dutch were a pious people, believing in the religious instruction of the young, and earnestly Jacobus Gerritt sought to discharge his duty to his young relatives. So when Dirck, after due consideration, chose the tile illustrating the story of the Good Samaritan he told it simply but forcibly. When he had finished the telling Kitty glanced questioningly at her grandmother.

"Shall I, Grandmother?" she asked.

"Well, and why not? Hermann will understand," answered Madame Gerritt.

"It is the last song my father sang to me," explained the little girl. "The night before he went away he took me on his knee and sang it to me. So always I sing it every night, for Dirck likes to hear it, too." Forthwith she sang crooningly the song that Dutch fathers and mothers sing to their little ones:

"Trip a trop a tronges,
De vorkens in de boonjes,
De koejes in de klaver,
De paardens in de haver,
De eenjes in de water plass,
De klafs in de long grass,
So goot mijn kleine poppetje was."[1]

A silence fell upon the group after the singing of the little lullaby, their thoughts going to the brave young

[1] From your throne upon my knee,
The pigs in the beanpatch see,
The cows in the clover meet,

father who slept in far-away Canada. Grandmother wiped her eyes, and Jacobus drew the boy and the girl into a close embrace. Presently Cornelia began to sing softly a hymn of consolation, which swelled into a chorus as the others joined her. After which Jacobus said briskly:

"And now to bed, children. 'Tis after eight of the clock, and time all young people were asleep if dunderheads they would not be at the morrow's tasks."

The horses in the oat-field eat,
The ducks in the water splash,
The calves scamper through the grass;
They love the baby on my knee
And none there are as sweet as she."

CHAPTER V

THE OUT-PARTY

CHILDREN who have been reared with kindness know not fear. It is only when subjected to blows or cruelty in some form that they learn to be afraid. Consequently Kitty, being a little maid used to tenderness and love, was troubled not at all by the threat of the sailor. When the morning came she found that it was otherwise with her uncle.

"Perchance to keep the little one from school for a time would be best," he remarked after a conference with his mother. "I liked not what the sailor said; nor did Mr. Willett."

"But, Uncle, I think the man meant naught," interposed Kitty. "I think he said what he did just as we

girls say, ' Just wait! it will be my turn next,' when we are vexed with each other. Yet 'tis only that we are angry, and not that we intend to do a thing. And he was angry, Uncle Jacobus."

" Yes, yes," nodded Jacobus. "And did he not have cause? I thought as thou dost, lambkin, until Marinus Willett spoke of the matter. 'Twill be the part of wisdom to be careful until the *Dolphin* sails, methinks."

" So do I think, Jacobus," spoke Madame Gerritt, drawing the little girl close to her. " 'Twould be as well for her to bide at home with Cornelia and me for a few days."

" No, no, Grandmother," pleaded Kitty. " I like the school when I have not to stay in; beside, I wish to seek forgiveness from Monsieur Dupre for my naughtiness yesterday. I should do that, as thou thyself didst say. I am sure that no hurt is intended me by anyone."

" Then both Dirck and Johanna must attend you to the school." Jacobus yielded at once to Kitty's wish.

" Jacobus, thou must not spoil the child," reproved his mother. " If 'twere best that she should stay at home, then stay she should."

" But, Mother, she wishes to go to the school," said Jacobus as though that settled the matter. "And if Dirck and Johanna are with her I see not that harm can befall. Dirck is careful of his sister beyond any lad that I have known; and Johanna hath the strength of a

man. But mind, little one! thou must wait at the school for thy brother and Johanna before starting for home."

"I will," promised Kitty, giving him a kiss. "Thou foolish uncle! who would want to harm thy little lambkin?"

"Who indeed?" questioned he fondly. "Dirck, look well to thy sister." And so saying he left for the shop while Kitty, fortified by the guardianship of Dirck and Johanna, a negro woman of great size and strength, set forth for the school.

It was customary for the girls of the better class of families to be put in charge of colored women when taken abroad for outings, but such chaperonage was not always observed in the journeys to and from school though it was not unusual. Therefore, two children escorted down the Broad Way by a large negress was not an uncommon sight in New York, where every family of means was possessed of two or more slaves. The Gerritts owned four, two men and two women, beside several little children of whom Dirck was given a boy, and Kitty a girl to be their personal attendants, for such was the custom.

Once upon the street Dirck began the same tactics that he had used the night before: peering cautiously behind the trees that lined the street, or stopping to look under the steps of the stoops of the residences. Presently he came to a full stop before a stoop and waved Kitty back.

"There's something under these steps," he said in a tense whisper. "I make no doubt but that it is an enemy. Stay where you are, Kitten, while I rout him. Johanna, do you hold tight to her."

Obediently Kitty and the negress stood still as the lad, with a flourish of his cane, began to poke under the steps of the stoop of a dwelling. Soon there came a grunt, followed by several squeals, and a pig ran out from under the steps. A peal of laughter came from Kitty and her dark attendant as Dirck turned toward them with a crestfallen air.

"I thought surely that it was the enemy lurking under the steps," he said. "And I wanted to get him before he got you, Kitten."

"Why should an enemy be lurking under a stoop?" asked the little girl when she could control her merriment. "So small a place it is, Dirck. I would like not to hide there, and I am just a small girl. And would any of the King's men know that I was to pass this way?"

"We-ll, you can't tell," answered Dirck slowly. He would have welcomed an opportunity to show his prowess. "At what are you laughing, Johanna?"

"Yi, yi," chuckled Johanna, showing her teeth in a broad grin. "Ah's t'inking erbout dat porker, Massa Dirck. Ah 'specs dat dem sailormen'd run de same way ef Massa Dirck go aftah dem. Lawsie, lawsie, how he did run!" Johanna burst into another peal of loud,

hearty laughter as she concluded her speech, and, much mollified, Dirck turned again to his sister.

"There! you see Johanna knows what I would have done had it in very truth been an enemy. Uncle Jacobus feared that some harm might come to you, so I am keeping a sharp lookout."

"But 'tis men to sail the ships that the King's men are looking for, Dirck. Not a little girl like me who can do naught. I cannot sail a vessel, nor do I care to learn how."

"Well, then I do," declared the boy earnestly. "When I'm a man and make my own way I'm going to have a ship of my own. Oh, Kitten, just think how fine it would be to sail the seas!"

"But Uncle Jacobus owns ships yet he does not sail the seas."

"Yes, but a merchant he is, Kitten. I have talked with the captains and sailors of his ships, and such tales they tell of other lands. I could not bear to keep accounts in a ledger, nor to buy and sell when there is adventure to be had on the sea."

"But Uncle Jacobus expects that a merchant you will be, Dirck."

"I know, Kitten. Still I don't believe that he would object very much to my being the captain of a ship, especially should I own the vessel. Once he said that when I had finished my schooling with Mr. Nicholas Welp he wanted that I should go to King's College, and

have all the advantages of the instruction there. After which he wished me to go to the Fatherland to Leyden for a year. Then to come back and go into the store. That is his plan for me, Kitten, but I told him that far rather would I be a sailor, and learn to sail a ship. And he said, 'Is it so? How blood will tell; for see now, lad! thy great-grandfather sailed the seas as commander of his own ship, and fought against the English under Admiral Tromp. Well, well, there is plenty of time. Learn all that thou canst at thy school, and we shall see.' So, you see, I may for a voyage go after all."

"But I don't want you to go away off on the seas," exclaimed Kitty tearfully.

The seas were wide and perilous in those days, and many tales were afloat in the city of wrecks, and buccaneers, and strange lands which fired the boy with longing for adventure, but dismayed his sister by their fearsomeness. Now the mere thought of her beloved brother venturing upon them made her tears flow.

"Why, Kitten, you're crying!" exclaimed Dirck, giving her arm a playful squeeze. "Oh, you little goose, don't you know that it will be years and years before I can go? If you begin to shed tears now just think what a time you'll have to keep it up until I do start. Perchance there will not be one left when you stand on the 'Weeper's Point' to see my ship bear me away."

A laugh was always very near the surface with Kitty, so now her dimples came quickly at his speech. Down

the Broad Way they trudged, hand in hand, the negress following closely after them, and keeping the guard which the boy had to all appearances forgotten.

The Broad Way was one of the pleasantest streets in the Knickerbocker City. It was very broad, quite eighty feet in width in its narrowest part, and gradually expanding into an area of more than twice that width at the Bowling Green. Beyond that lay the Fort, its batteries built on black rocks which jutted picturesquely into the noble bay. On the wide expanse of water were many sails of small craft and pleasure boats which winged their way like gulls to the islands that dotted the bay, or to points on the Jersey shore. A pleasant street in truth, with prospects of the Jersey heights, or the forest-crowned hills of Nassau Island,[1] gorgeous now in autumnal colorings.

Past the King's Arms Tavern, where scarlet-coated officers lounged on the broad piazzas, they walked. The town was full of officers and soldiers, brought hither from Canada for a twofold purpose: that they might be cared for by the citizens; and that they might be in readiness to enforce any measures proposed by the King should trouble arise concerning them. Swaggering officers of all grades were they who brought with them much contempt for the provincials in general. Sometimes they called "Mohair" after a gentleman as he passed, for this was an army word of contempt for the

[1] Long Island.

colonist. Their red coats gleamed brightly against the white painted wood of the piazza, and Kitty smiled involuntarily, pleased by the contrast. At this Dirck scowled.

"The King's men must look to themselves when I'm a man," he said fiercely. "Mr. Willett says that these differences with the King may end by the colonies taking up arms, and if they do ——" He paused significantly.

"Oh, Dirck! you don't mean that the colonies might go to war with England?" questioned the little maid breathlessly.

"It's possible, Kitten." In common with most boys of the time Dirck kept his ears wide open to the talk that went on, and heard all that the more radical of the Whigs were saying.

"I wish not that there should be war, Dirck. Father came not back from the French and Indian War. Should there be war with England, and you should go you might not come back either. My brother, I could not bear ——" Kitty was unable to continue.

"Poh! it will be years before it happens, Kitten. I meant only that when it comes I shall play as brave a part as any. But here we are at Mistress Clementina's. Now mind, you're not to start for home until Johanna and I come for you. And don't you dare to get kept after hours else Grandmother will be uneasy. You hear?"

"Yes, my brother," she replied sweetly. "I'm going to be so good that for one of the monitors will Mistress Clementina choose me to-day."

Whether it was Dirck's admonition, or the remembrance of the forthcoming second volume of Mr. Smith's history, Kitty was as good as her word, and when Dirck came from his school in Garden Street he found her waiting with Johanna for him. In this manner, observing precaution with regard to the little girl's comings and goings, several days went by with nothing to mar their serenity. Then Jacobus came to the belief that, as Kitty had said, the remark of the sailor was a mere angry threat. A few days of tranquillity served to strengthen this belief so that, although the *Dolphin* still lay at anchor in the bay, the incident of the sailors and the threat was forgotten in the occurrence of other events. For things were moving swiftly in New York.

Previous to this time the colonies had protested separately against any bad measure made by the mother country, but now a common grievance had drawn them together which resulted in a meeting, called The Stamp Act Congress. For the first time since the settlement of the provinces a united effort was to be made to treat the differences with the King, and momentous results were to come of this meeting. The city was agog with excitement, and the wildest rumors were rife with regard to the delegates. Both Dirck and Kitty shared the

general interest, and were eager to see for themselves the grave men who formed the Congress.

The Congress convened on the seventh day of the month which fell on Monday, therefore, on account of school, the boy and girl were unable to gratify their curiosity to see the delegates. But the " Company " to which both belonged had arranged a nutting party for the following Saturday, and at Dirck's suggestion it was decided to stop on the way at the City Hall to watch the assembling of the colonies' representatives.

There was a curious custom in the towns of the Province whereby the children gathered themselves into " Companies " or " Sets," as they were called in later years. It was a custom of Dutch origin, but in cosmopolitan New York had been eagerly seized upon by the children of all nationalities for their own, and English, French, Scotch, Irish and German, vied with the Dutch children in its observance. Every Company contained as many boys as girls, usually about the same age. They always played together, and had annual festivals which were observed religiously among them. These consisted of Berryings, May-day celebrations, and Out-parties, as the nutting picnics were called.

The Company to which Kitty and Dirck belonged numbered twelve: six boys and six girls. " The Signs of the Zodiac," one of their elders had facetiously called them, and gleefully the twelve seized upon the appellation, shortening the name to " The Zodiacs."

In addition to a special name every Company had its own special basket which was used as a mark, or badge, to distinguish it from any other Company. These were pretty, light baskets made, as from early Dutch days, by Indian squaws with lids and handles which hung on the arm. They also were adorned with various designs and colors, each Company having its own design and color.

Saturday dawned a perfect day. The unseasonable heat of the first days of the month had been succeeded by a crisp coolness that gave zest and animation to life. There was a fresh breeze full of the smell of the sea and the odor of ripened peaches, and pears, and apples; an intensely blue sky with flying battalions of fleecy clouds across it, and the radiant sunshine above all. The fineness of the day brought forth the people, and the streets were thronged with men and women whose velvets, brocades and taffetas rivaled the tints of the autumn leaves in coloring.

It was ten of the clock, as the hands of the public clock on the City Hall indicated, when the twelve turned from the Broad Way into Wall Street, and took stations opposite the entrance to the Hall in front of Mr. Agar's drug store. The street was filled with people drawn as the children had been by curiosity to see the men who were come together to protest against England's treatment of her subjects. The Hall itself was decorated with many flags and banners as were also some of the

houses opposite and around it, and those residences whose good fortune it was to possess balconies were crowded almost to overflowing with fair dames and gentlemen who, whether Whig or Loyalist, were not averse to seeing the men of repute from the sister provinces.

"Do you know any of the men, Dirck?" questioned Kitty, who was perched on a box in front of the store.

"Two or three who were in the store yesterday," answered Dirck with some pride. "I just ran on to them by chance when Uncle Jacobus was talking to them. Of course we all know Mr. Cruger, and Mr. Livingston, and Mr. Robert Roosevelt, and others of our own men, but I know Mr. Samuel Adams of Massachusetts too. Uncle Jacobus introduced me."

"He's the worst rebel of them all," spoke an English lad standing by his side. "Father says that Massachusetts and the other New England Colonies were in rebellion before they came over, and have been ever since."

"'Tis not rebellion to object to unjust taxation," declared Dirck heatedly. "Uncle Jacobus says that 'tis not. And just see what England is trying to do to us!"

"Oh, boys," broke in Kitty who did not wish the nutting party spoiled by wrangling, "Grandmother put some boiled crabs in the lunch just especially for you. And some oly koecks too."

"And shall not the girls have some of the crabs also?"

asked a little Dutch maiden. "I care not for oly koecks, for some of them I have. Yes, and 'izer cookies' too. But not the crabs."

"They should be for girls, for boys, for everyone in this city," declared the English youth slyly, "for they bear England's color—red."

"But red they are not until they are boiled," cried Kitty. "First, their claws are blue and red which was the color of the flag of the Prince of Orange. Grandmother says so."

"But they turn red the first chance they get," retorted the lad teasingly. "Just as you Dutch did when an English ship came into the bay, and made you put up the English red. Just as you will do again when England gets through with you despite your congresses of delegates."

Kitty's face flushed, and her blue eyes snapped. She opened her lips to make a sharp retort when one of the boys cried:

"There comes the Mayor. And what a number of gentlemen are with him!"

A sigh of relief went up from the children for the waiting had seemed long to their impatience. There was a craning of necks to see the grave-looking men who represented the colonies, a pushing forward by the people that almost drove the young folks from their advantageous positions. It was in no sense a parade of the delegates, but the crowd treated it as such, and

cheered heartily as it caught sight of Mr. John Cruger, Jr., the mayor, ascending the steps of the City's House. Behind him came the New York gentlemen escorting the gentlemen from the other provinces to the Assembly Room. The Hall was always used as a place to welcome distinguished visitors.

"Oh, there is Uncle Jacobus!" cried Kitty shrilly. "And who is the tall man with him, Dirck?"

Dirck did not hear her. He was gazing eagerly at the delegates, too absorbed to notice anything else. Kitty leaned over from her place on the box to touch him when her glance was caught by a man standing directly opposite to them.

She drew a deep breath, and looked again. It was the sailor who had threatened her, and he was staring at her with an insolent leer.

CHAPTER VI

THE END OF THE OUT-PARTY

For a long moment Kitty looked at the man, and the man looked at her. There was something so sinister in his glance that for the first time a feeling of fear chilled her. Involuntarily she shivered.

"Why, Kitty, how queer it is that cold you should be when the sun is so warm," exclaimed the small maiden who had objected to the boys getting all the boiled crabs.

"I—I am not cold," stammered Kitty weakly, unable to turn her eyes from the face of the sailor.

"Hast the megrims then? At what are you looking? I see naught that should make you look as you do," persisted the little girl.

But at this Kitty roused herself, and called:

"Dirck! Oh, Dirck!"

The tone of her voice was such that her brother's attention was instantly caught. He turned toward her quickly.

"What is it, Kitten?" he asked anxiously at sight of her face. "What's the matter?"

"'Tis the sailor, Dirck. He stands right across from us."

"Where?" asked the boy excitedly, glancing in the direction indicated. "I don't see him."

"There, at the foot of the steps of the Hall. On your right, my brother. Oh, he's gone!"

At this moment there came a stir and a surge of the people as the doors of the Hall closed upon the delegates, and in the movement of the crowd the man disappeared. Kitty breathed a sigh of relief.

"What did he do, Kitten? Did he make any threats, or any motion of any sort toward you?"

The whole Company clustered about the little maid as Dirck questioned her, for her exploit with the King's men had become generally known.

"He looked at me," faltered she.

"Was that all?"

Kitty nodded, and drew closer to her brother as the fellow's expression came back to her. "He looked at me," she said again.

A shout of laughter went up from the boys and girls as she repeated the words.

"He looked at her," cried the English lad laughing. "You little goose, he couldn't hurt you by looking at you."

But Dirck was grave. "How did he look, Kitten?"

Kitty put her hand to her head in a puzzled manner. "I don't know," she replied slowly. Then her face cleared as a thought came to her. "Like he was hungry, Dirck. As the wolf was when he ate up poor little Red Riding Hood. You remember the story Aunt Cornelia tells us about it? 'Twas like the wolf he looked."

"I wonder," mused her brother soberly, "if home we would better go, Kitten? I like not for the fellow to be where we are. 'Twould seem as though he were following us."

"Belike not," scoffed the English youth. "The street is free to all, and 'tis more than likely that he was here merely to see those delegates. Even a King's man has the right to do that, though some of you would deny him even that privilege."

New Yorkers have ever been a peculiarly mixed people, and the little Company to which Dirck and Kitty belonged was a typical example of this cosmopolitanism. Though the Dutch element predominated, English, French, and Scotch were among them. Therefore, in the general state of public feeling it was natural that the usually harmonious relations of the children should sometimes be disturbed by differences; for young

people, commonly, but reflect the opinions of their elders. Dirck made no reply to the boy. He was too worried to care much what the youth was saying. Now he said again:

"I believe that home we would better go, Kitten." At this there rose a chorus of protests:

"Oh, Dirck, 'twould spoil the Out-party!"

"We couldn't have any fun without you and Kitty."

"Don't go! We'll take good care of her. We won't let anyone hurt her." And so on.

Kitty's momentary fright had vanished by this time, and she too began to protest against the return home.

"You could care for me, my brother," she said with all the confidence of a younger child in the ability of an elder one to look after him. "You would be with me all the day, and you would let no one hurt me; would you?"

"Well, no one had better try it while I'm around," declared the lad. "We'll go, Kitten, if you say so, but stick close to me. If we see anything more of that sailor he shall give good reason for being near us, or the wight must take the consequences." So saying he tucked her hand under his arm, then gave the word of command:

"At-tention! Fall In! Forwa-ard, March!"

With a gleeful shout the twelve hastily formed in line. They were bound for Kalch Hoek, a hill lying to the west of the Collect, or Fresh Water Pond, to

gather nuts. On rare occasions, when they could get permission from the Governor, they went to Nutten's Island [1] where there were great groves of hickory and chestnut trees; but this latter was an expedition viewed with alarm by the mothers as it entailed a journey across the bay.

The crowd had dispersed leaving but few people in the street. These drew good-naturedly aside to let the line of laughing children pass. There was nowhere any sign of the sailor, and by the time the short distance from the City Hall to the Broad Way was traversed the children were treating his appearance as part of the outing's entertainment. Kitty's spirits were soaring, and Dirck too seemed to have cast aside all alarm. The bells of the churches were striking eleven o'clock as the young people entered the Broad Way, and high above them all sounded the deep-throated bell of Trinity. The English youth glanced up at the Gothic architecture, the statues in stone, and the flanking walls of Trinity Church, and remarked patronizingly:

"I say, that's a pretty good church for over here, you know? But of course it has to be when His Majesty's Representative, the Governor, attends it. And its bell hath a most excellent sound."

"I like the bell on the old kirk in Garden Street better," spoke Dirck. "It was the first bell ever brought to New Amsterdam, and for a number of years was on

[1] Nutten's Island—Governor's Island.

the kirk in the Fort. When the new kirk was built outside the Fort the bell was taken from the First Church, and placed on it. Grandmother says that it hath the most silvery tone of any bell in New York."

"But that's just because——" began the English boy in such a patronizing tone that Kitty, scenting trouble, broke in hastily:

"Mr. William Smith says that Trinity Church is one of the noblest edifices in the colonies, Dirck. And he goes on to say:" Kitty's tones became singsongy as she cited from Mr. Smith's History.

"'It stands very pleasantly on the banks of the Hudson River; it hath a large cemetery on each side enclosed by a painted, paled fence; before it a long walk is railed off from the Broad Way, the pleasantest street in town.'

"Just think of writing all that about the church when it is known to everybody that it is a fine church and hath a graveyard on each side of it. Such a foolishness it is to write such things when they are known to us all."

"But see now, Kitten, there are those who do not know these things," objected Dirck. "How would we know about the church if we did not live in New York? We would be glad then to have Mr. Smith's History."

"We could ask Grandmother," bubbled Kitty. "She knows all about this kirk, and about the first Trinity Kirk as well; for her mother was at the laying of the corner-stone. And it was a most fe-felicitous occasion, she says. Mr. Smith does not say that at all, which

shows that he knows not as much as Grandmother does. So what need is there for him to write?"

Everyone laughed at this, understanding well Kitty's aversion to Mr. Smith's History. Gaily the young people proceeded up the broad thoroughfare, lined with trees through whose foliage gleamed the spires of churches, for a number of them were built in the street, or near by in the side streets. There were residences also, and taverns whose proprietors advertised the advantageous situations of their houses in the Broad Way, dwelling upon the beautiful prospects to be had therefrom, thus proving that others beside Mr. William Smith deemed it the pleasantest street in the little city. There were handsome stores too, but these were principally in the vicinity of the Oswego Market, to which presently the children came. This market stood in the middle of the Broad Way, opposite Crown Street, and consisted of a number of long, low buildings to which the aristocrats of the west side came with their black servants of a morning to do their marketing. Beyond the market many open spaces were interspersed with the buildings, and still beyond were woods and fields.

The twelve were marching up the eastern side of the street, and had nearly passed the market when suddenly a shout went up from them as from the western side of Oswego there filed around the northern end another Company of children. The latter raised their baskets, and shook them defiantly at the Zodiacs.

"Ours are the prettiest baskets," shouted the captain. "We'll beat you to the Kalch Hoek, and get them full of nuts first. See if we don't."

It was a point of honor among the Companies to maintain the supremacy of the beauty of their emblems, so now every one of the twelve clasped his basket more tightly as Dirck's ringing voice took up the challenge.

"'Tis not true; our baskets are the prettiest. To prove it we will give you all the nuts we gather if you fill your baskets before we do ours. And ours are larger too."

"You don't dare to try it," came mockingly from the other Company.

"We dare! We dare!" shouted the twelve in chorus. "Beat us to Kalch Hoek if you can."

"We can! We can!" came the reply.

And then with laughter and gibes the two rival Companies began a quick march up the street which degenerated into a scramble on the part of the twelve as their rivals tore past the wheat field where Trinity Church had already laid the corner-stone for the new St. Paul's Chapel, crossed over to the eastern side of Great George Street, an English name given to this part of the Broad Way, and turned into the High Road to Boston which skirted the Common on the south and east. A gasp of consternation came from the twelve at this feat, for it gave a great advantage to the rival Company. Should

it reach the Kalch Hoek before them the chances of the Zodiacs getting their baskets filled first with nuts were small. At this opportune moment a way by which their Company could circumvent its rival occurred to Kitty. Instantly she turned to her brother.

"Let's keep straight up the Middle Road, Dirck. Then we can cross to the Kalch Hoek through the grounds of the Poor House and the negro burying place. Rough is the way, but mind it we shall not if we can beat the others to the hill."

"'Tis the very thing, Kitten," cried Dirck exultantly. "How did you come to think of it? Come on, everybody! We'll beat them after all. The Middle Road! Right about, face! Forward, march!"

With a shout of glee the twelve wheeled, and passed westward through the trees to the narrow wagon road which had recently been cut to the northward. It was a mere lane through the woods hardly entitled to the name of road, and but little traversed. In later years it became an extension of the Broad Way. It skirted the Common on the west, losing itself shortly in the hills beyond.

The Fields, or Common, was the playground of the little city; the open-air meeting-place where games or sports were indulged in the daytime, and bonfires built at night on festive occasions. Here were held the patriotic celebrations of the King's birthday, Guy Fawkes's Day, and other holidays. Here too came the

children and young people for May Pole Dances and similar occurrences which had been held in the Bowling Green before it was rented to three of the citizens for bowls. Here also, in the spring of the year, came the blacks for the games of the old Dutch holiday of Pfingster, when freedom was allowed them for the celebration of the festivity. A number of public buildings and lime kilns were scattered about the Common: a Poor House with a large vegetable garden, the New Jail, and some barracks for soldiers, as those in the Fort had been found insufficient to accommodate the large number of soldiers in the city.

Through the trees in the Poor House[1] grounds the twelve wended their way, and thence through the gardens to the negro burying ground, keeping well away from the Barracks, for the troops occupying them were of turbulent spirit, often causing confusion in the city. The burying ground contained many nut trees, and the children might easily have filled their baskets from them, but Kitty shook her head decidedly when this was suggested.

" Eat them I could not," she said, " if they grew in a graveyard. Beside, where could we get water to drink if we do not stop beside the Collect? "

This was unanswerable. The question of drinking water had always to be taken into consideration on Manhattan where, with the exception of Fresh Water

[1] This building stood where the City Hall now stands.

Pond and a few wells, all water was brackish in taste. So without further ado the Company hurriedly ascended the slopes of Kalch Hoek, crossed to the eastern side, and tired but triumphant, for the rival Company was nowhere to be seen, threw themselves prone upon the grass. It was fine under the trees, and for a little time the children did no more than look about them.

Behind them rose the Kalch Hoek, a conical elevation of about fifty feet, densely wooded and sloping down to the Collect. This beautiful little lakelet stretched across to another hill, Catiemuts Hoek, also densely wooded. To the south, beyond a stretch of high ground, lay another pond called Little Collect. It was not so lovely as its larger neighbor, for it was but a marshy pond. But the Collect waters were clear and sparkling, and of great depth. It was a famous fishing ground, being full of perch and sunfish, and in winter served as a park for merry skating parties. Indeed it was at all times a favorite place for walks and drives from the town. It was small wonder that the children liked to sit and look about them.

All sorts of wild things peeped at them. Squirrels chattered and leaped among the branches of the trees, and sometimes the nuts came rattling down through the leaves. The boys, presently, began to amuse themselves by throwing stones into the Collect to see if they could "sound bottom." In fact it was currently reported to

be bottomless. There were many strange rumors regarding this depth, and the little maids whispered to each other the fearful stories of how terrible and hideous monsters came up out of it to catch any solitary person who leaned too far over its banks. But Dirck did not permit a long rest to the Company.

"And now for the nuts," he said when he thought his forces were rested sufficiently.

"Oh, couldn't we eat our dinner first?" cried one, a boy of course.

"And have that other Company beat us getting nuts?" cried Kitty, jumping to her feet. "Why, we would have to give them all we picked."

"It won't take long with the girls to help us," spoke Dirck encouragingly.

With this the whole Company set to with a will. The boys climbed the trees, and shook down the hickory-nuts, butternuts, and chestnuts while the girls picked them up. Soon the baskets were filled, and then they sat down to wait for the appearance of the other Company. It was not long until with shouts of triumph the boys and girls of the rival Company were seen approaching through the trees, waving their baskets triumphantly.

"Our baskets are filled," shouted the leader.

"And so are ours," answered Dirck, indicating the baskets of the Zodiacs which were full to overflowing.

The leader of the other Company gazed at them with a crestfallen air.

"How long has it been since they were finished?" he asked at length.

"About fifteen minutes," Dirck told him. "Where did you get yours?"

"From the nut trees near the beech grove. You know. Just where the road turns into Kalch Hoek."

"Then it's a tie," Dirck announced judicially. "You've had yours as long as we have ours, for it takes just about fifteen minutes to walk here from the beech grove."

"Oh, Dirck!" came in a protesting chorus from his Company.

"Yes, it does," asserted Dirck positively. The boy was always exact in his dealings with others. "So neither Company has beaten. We will have to try again some other time."

"That's fair," agreed the other. "We will try again some time. Well, good-bye!" Calling to his companions to follow he started off to seek another spot for their picnic; no Company intruded upon another in its outings.

Then the little maidens of the Zodiacs spread snowy cloths under the great trees that showed in their large girth and gnarled branches that they had grown for hundreds of years. And such dainties as were spread upon the cloths! New York children probably had the greatest variety of cookies, crullers, and various small cakes of any children in the colonies, for the Dutch

housevrouws excelled in cake making. So our little party did full justice to the rusks, the oly koecks which always held a nut or a raisin, as the true oly koeck invariably does; the " izer cookies," which the New Jersey people called " split-cakes," and the Philadelphians " squeeze-cakes," while the English lad in the Company spoke of them as " hard-waffles." But they were toothsome under whatever name, as were the ham, and the chicken, and the pickles, and the boiled crabs, and other things too numerous to mention. A drink of water finished the repast, and then the girls brought out their samplers and knitting to do an allotted stint, for they were industrious little maids, and had been taught that work must follow play. Presently Dirck called the attention of the party to the westering sun.

" It grows late," he said. " There is but time for a game of 'I Spy' before home we must go. 'Twas afternoon before we reached here, you know."

Reluctantly the children agreed with him, though none of them wished to leave. A day on the banks of the Collect was always fine, but even the Collect would not be pleasant after dark. So, after a few protests, there was a scramble for hiding-places as the Counter took his position before a tree. Now Kitty did not like " I Spy," for she could not hide but that she was caught first of all, but she was all ready to do what the others wished. There followed a merry game but as usual Kitty was discovered just when she supposed that she

was most cleverly hidden. This happened so often that even her sunny temper was crossed.

"The next time I'll hide so that I cannot be found," she declared in vexed tones as Dirck offered to take her turn as Counter.

"You can't hide so that I won't find you, Kitten," laughed Dirck. "Now ready, everybody! One, two, three,—run on, Kitten! I'm counting fast."

Kitty darted away, stooped under a bush for a moment, and then, still bending so that she could not be seen, ran back into the deep woods. When well out of sight of the party she rose, turned sharply toward the west, and went swiftly and noiselessly down into a little ravine filled with thick clumps of alder bushes, stopping at length behind a great oak tree that completely hid her tiny form. Pretty soon she heard Dirck's voice in the distance calling:

"Kitty, Kitty, where are you?" The little maid smiled roguishly to herself.

"This is one time that he won't find me," she chuckled gleefully, drawing closer to the tree trunk.

So very quiet did she keep that a small chipmunk gliding down the tree took no note of her but continued his downward way. Here, there, everywhere, sounded the voices of the children seeking her, but quiet as a mouse kept Kitty. Fainter and fainter grew the voices, and presently died away altogether. Then the little rogue straightened up laughing.

"Dirck couldn't find me after all, though he was sure that he could. I'll just creep upon him very softly, and scare him."

Just at this moment there came a stifled exclamation, followed by the report of a gun, and a ball came whistling over her head, cutting the twigs and leaves, and burying itself deep in the bark of the oak tree.

Kitty gave a scream, and crouched affrightedly against the tree. Shooting was a favorite sport with the citizens of Manhattan, and there was plenty of game to be had near the city. Many fatal accidents occurred due to carelessness, or defective sight where a hunter mistook a person for the game. Only the week before Jacobus Gerritt had read aloud from the *Weekly Mercury* where one hunter had mistaken another for the game in Mr. Bayard's woods near the Bowery Lane, and had shot him. All this flashed through the little girl's mind, as she turned, slowly and fearfully, to see the hunter.

It was no hunter who glared at her from behind a distant tree, but the British sailor who had threatened her in her uncle's store. In his hand he held a gun, and on his face was the same expression that had frightened her so much when she had seen him that morning before the City Hall.

Kitty gave but one glance at him. For the briefest space of time she was too terrorized to do aught but stare at the fellow; then, with a shrill scream of "Dirck!

Dirck!" she turned and ran wildly, panic-stricken, in the opposite direction from the man. She supposed that she was going straight back to Dirck and the Company. Instead she ran toward the west around the base of Kalch Hoek.

CHAPTER VII

ON DANGEROUS GROUND

On and on ran Kitty: ran as the deer runs when the hounds are in pursuit. Blind, unreasoning fear swayed her, lending wings to her feet. Through tangled underbrush, wild grape-vines, and brambles whose thorns tore her dainty frock she went unheedingly. Her breath came in catchy, gasping sobs, and ever and anon she tried to call, "Dirck! Dirck!"

Kitty thought that she called her brother's name aloud. In reality, after her first cry, she uttered only pitiful little whispers. On she ran; filled with that wild terror that sees a foe lurking behind every bush and tree. Unwittingly she followed the trend of the ravine

where she had hidden behind the oak tree, and this led her from the east side of the Kalch Hoek to the west side of the eminence.

Beyond the Kalch Hoek, following the curve of its base, there spread to the westward and northward the broad pasture lands, swamps, and salt marshes of the Lispenard Meadows. Save that portion of the land which had been reclaimed by Mr. Anthony Rutgers for pasture it was a miry morass, permeated with the waters of the Collect, for an outlet of the Fresh Water Pond flowed through the marshes to Hudson's River. It was covered with a thick growth of bushes, brambles and small trees, and was a valley dangerous alike to man and beast.

In seasons of heavy rains almost the whole district was flooded, but during the dry seasons the region furnished much valuable pasture land. The boys of New York fished in the creeks, or, regardless of brambles, waded in the swamps in search of bullfrogs and water-snakes, joint tenants with the snipes and woodcock.

Into this dismal, marshy valley at length came Kitty. How she reached its bogs and treacherous network of vines and brambles she could not have told. She was conscious only of wanting to find Dirck, of wanting to get away from the British sailor. She had lost her pattens, and her little high-heeled shoes of calimanco thus exposed were soon wet through, and sticky with the

slime of the morass. Presently one of her heels caught in a straggling vine; she stumbled, and fell prostrate on the ground. She tried to get up to go on, but instead the movement started her rolling down a slight declivity. She landed in a dense clump of alder bushes matted thick with wild grape-vines. An otter slid into the water near her as she came to a stop, and the guttural twang of a bullfrog as he plashed frightened the little girl so that she made no attempt to rise, but lay quite still, fearful of she knew not what. The alders screened her, and there were rushes and bunches of long grass under the grape-vines which kept her from the water. So Kitty lay quite still, quaking with fear of the wild things about her, and full of dread lest at any moment the sailor might come upon her.

But after the crash of her tumble there was naught but the sounds of Nature to disturb the stillness of the solitudes. At another time Kitty would have been pleased with the yellow of the leaves that formed her bed, and would have noticed that all about her were tender leaves, nipped by the frosts into brilliant dyes of orange, purple, and scarlet. She would have delighted in the streaming files of wild ducks flying high in the air; in the bark of the squirrels that might be heard from the groves of beech and hickory nuts on the slopes of Kalch Hoek, and in the pensive whistle of the quails which came at intervals from the pastures. There was the smell of mint, and catnip, and tansy from the wet

borders of the swamp, and had Dirck been with her, and there had been no fear of the sailor, Kitty would have counted the adventure great fun.

She knew that she was in the Lispenard Meadows, but that knowledge brought small comfort. Dirck had told of them often, and had laughed at their dangers when his grandmother had feared for him to go there for fishing or berries. Kitty had seen them once when her Uncle Jacobus had taken her with him to Greenwich, for the causeway leading to that village crossed them, and he had spoken then of their dangers, and that it was a pity Mr. Rutgers' work had not been continued. There were many tales told of the disappearance of cattle and belated travelers among their bogs, so Kitty lay pondering the matter, wondering what was best to do, and thinking harder than she had ever done in her life.

To go back to Kalch Hoek might mean another encounter with the sailor, and forward she dared not go lest she might find a worse place than the one where she was. So she lay still while about her sounded the soft lap of the water, and the stir of the wild things. Long she lay gazing up at the sky where a hawk lazily circled, and as nothing came to disturb her gradually the panic of fear left her, and her heart ceased its tumultuous beating. After a time long dark shadows began to creep through the bushes and trees, and the thicket was enveloped in a haze of gloom. Kitty roused herself with

a start, parted the bushes and looked about her. To her consternation the sun was sinking behind the heights of Hoboken. She must get out of that terrible swamp, she said to herself. She must do it somehow, and surely by this time the sailor had given up trying to find her.

With the idea of retracing her steps to the Kalch Hoek she left the thicket, and started toward the hill. But alas! at every turn she seemed to find nothing but mire into which she sank at every step. The sun sank behind the hills, and twilight brooded over the water and bushes of the swamp. Kitty stood still, afraid to move in any direction, her heart filled with dread. What could she do? Where was she to find shelter? The moan of a whippoorwill from the hillside struck upon her ear like a knell. The bats were beginning to flit about in the twilight. Night with its darkness and unknown terrors was closing down, and wrapping everything in gloom. The breeze which had been bracing through the day was chilly now and penetrating. Her capuchin and calash[1] had been thrown aside when the games were played, so now the little girl shivered in the night air.

Must she stay in this dreadful place all night? Never in all her young life had she been out alone after dark, and the prospect of spending a night in the swamp filled her with terror. The boding cry of a tree toad, that harbinger of a storm, and the dreary hooting of a

[1] Hood.

screech-owl fluttered her heart and caused her to start and tremble. Every sound of Nature filled her with fear. Suddenly there came a plashy tramp, and from out of the gloom something huge and black rose near her. Kitty tried to scream, but the cry froze on her lips. Her teeth chattered, her knees smote together, and she stood rooted to the spot in terror.

All the stories of goblins and monsters that she had ever heard came to her, and she stood expecting that the next moment the thing would spring upon her and devour her. Just at this moment the shadowy object of alarm put itself in motion, and the unmistakable tinkle of a cow-bell sounded upon the night air. It was a cow. A laugh of relief burst from Kitty's lips: a laugh that held more of tears than it did of mirth. To her surprise the laugh seemed to bring a response, for surely she heard a hallooing. Vague and faint at first, but drawing nearer and nearer. Presently she could distinguish the words that a voice, a Dutch voice, was uttering. Her heart leaped at its accents.

"Ah, Brindle!" spoke the voice, "art possessed of the goblin of the swamp that you laugh? Come now, like a good cow! 'Tis cold out here in the wet and dark, and there's a fine dry stable with grain waiting for you. Come, Brindle, come!"

"Boy, boy," screamed Kitty, scarcely able to control herself so glad was she to know that someone was close to her.

"Who calls?" came the question in boyish tones filled with astonishment.

"A little girl. I'm lost. Oh, please help me to get out of this awful place. You will help me, won't you?" she ended tearfully, for the tears would come now that help was near.

"Donder! A little girl? Of course I will. Right gladly too. Where are you?"

"Right by the cow with the bell," she told him.

"Could you follow her? Better still, just put your hand on her neck, and she will lead you here. She's very gentle."

Kitty made an effort to reach the cow, but sank down instead, her strength leaving all at once. "I can't," she wailed. "I—I'm so tired."

"Wait a minute! I'll come to you," came the reply in cheery tones. "Now keep talking to me so that I'll know where you are."

There followed plashing, and the sound of breaking twigs and tearing vines as the lad made his way to her. Kitty could trace his progress by the rush light that he carried. Presently his form issued from the dark shadows of the trees, and came to her side. He was about Dirck's age, and wore a woolen cap with clothes of homespun. All this Kitty noticed as she raised her tear-stained face. His countenance was very expressive, and was just at this moment filled with commiseration at the little girl's plight.

"You poor little thing!" he exclaimed with boyish sympathy. "You must be half dead out here in this cold and wet. And scared to death too, all alone."

"All alone," repeated Kitty, like the child she was. "And I'm so tired."

"There, there," said he, patting her awkwardly on the shoulder. "It will be all right now. I'm here, you know. Ah! I have the very thing! Brindle now! Brindle is as gentle as a lambkin. Carry you to my house shall she. Many a time have I ridden her home, so that she will make no fuss."

"What? Ride a cow?" Kitty laughed through her tears. "So funny 'twould be to ride a cow."

"And why not? So strong she is, and gentle. But one fault hath she which is that too oft she strays far afield, and must be sought for after dark. But that," he added quickly, "is no longer a fault since it hath led me to find you."

"Such good words do you speak," declared Kitty, beginning to feel more like herself. "You mind me of my brother, Dirck, so good you are. My name is Catherine Gerritt, but my friends call me Kitty. You may do so too, if you like, for a good friend have you been this night."

"Well then, I do like, Kitty," he said as he lifted her to a seat on the broad back of the cow. "My name is Hermanus Timm, but my friends call me Newty."

"But Newty is not short for Hermanus," spoke Kitty questioningly. "Not as Kitty is for Catherine."

The boy laughed.

"No," he said. "'Tis not short for Hermanus, but a cousin I had who gave me the name. A girl she was, nine years old when I was born. She came to see me then, and she said, 'I wish to see the newty baby.' And always when she came she said that: 'I wish to see the newty baby.' So everyone called me the newty baby, and after a time it was 'Newty.' And Newty it hath been ever since."

"Oh, but that is funny," cried Kitty laughing. "And I like it. It is a good name. Better, I think, than Hermanus, though that," she hastened to add, "is not bad. And may I call you Newty?"

"Yes, Kitty. Ah! is not Brindle a fine cow? As I walk beside you with my hand upon her neck you have no fear, Kitty?"

"No," Kitty assured him. "So nice it is upon her back; just as easy as a cradle."

"That is good. And how came you to be lost in the Meadows? So far are they from the city that you should never venture alone there. It is not safe for anyone after dark."

And Kitty told him all about the sailor and the King's men, and how one of them had threatened her which had brought about this ending to the Out-party. The lad

heard her with visible excitement. Scarcely had she finished the telling when he said:

"You spoke of a boy in a butcher's cart helping you. Well then, I am that boy. I saw the happening with the King's men that day."

"Are you?" cried Kitty. "Oh, how glad I am to meet you. I wanted to thank you for what you did then, but I knew not where to find you. How strange it is that you should help me that day, and now you are here to help me again. Uncle Jacobus, and Dirck, and Grandmother, and Aunt Cornelia will be so glad to know you, and to thank you for so helping me to find myself. Oh! how much worriment I am causing them! Had I stayed near Dirck I would not have been lost. How they must be grieving!"

"Think not about it, Kitty. Soon will they know where you are, for to my mother shall you go, and then I will carry word to your people of your whereabouts. Mother will care for you until your uncle, or your brother can come for you. I cannot take you home unless Brindle you would ride through the streets. We —we have no horse now."

Something in the boy's tone made Kitty say quickly:

"But such a nice cow you have, Newty. And milk she gives too which a horse would not, you know."

"No; milk a horse would not give," agreed Newty Timm laughing.

Kitty laughed too, quite gaily considering all that she had gone through, and so they went on through the darkness. She was no longer afraid or nervous though a screech-owl hooted twice quite near them, and the guttural notes of the bullfrogs sounded unceasingly. One by one the stars came out, and the new moon sank low in the west. It seemed to her that they traveled a long distance before they came at length to a farmhouse which the boy told her was his home. In reality the distance was not more than half a mile, but the cow moved slowly, and Newty Timm picked his way with great caution.

The house was a low-roofed Dutch farmhouse; with its stoop, its swinging half doors, its small paned and heavily shuttered windows, and its capacious exterior chimneys. It stood with its gable end toward the lane that ran past, and on the gable was a weathercock. Had it been daylight Kitty would have seen its outer cellar, partly excavated in a small hill and partly sodded over. A dog ran out to meet them, barking joyously and leaping upon the boy as though glad of his return. As Newty Timm lifted Kitty from the cow he said hurriedly:

"There is but my mother and my grandfather beside myself, Kitty. And Grandfather likes not to hear any language but the Dutch. Speak that alone to him for he likes not the English. No; nor ever will. Nor will he conform to any of their customs, for so did his father

And So They Went on Through the Darkness

bring him up. His father would never visit the city after it became New York, and neither does Grandfather visit it. In truth, I do not believe that he was ever there. Always he waits for the time when the English shall be overthrown, and New York become once more New Amsterdam. My own father was not like that, nor is my mother. Unknown to Grandfather I have learned the English, for see now! 'Tis not everyone who understands the Dutch, and the butcher would not have me for his boy could I not speak it. And my mother must have money. But in our bouwerie everything is according to the old Dutch custom. You will not mind?"

"Why, no," she told him quickly. "We too speak only the Dutch at home, and observe the customs too. Grandmother says bouwerie for our farm too, but Uncle Jacobus calls it a Country Seat. So do Dirck and I, but I suppose that we younger ones don't feel about things as the older people do."

"Well then, I don't know about that, Kitty. Neither you nor I feel very good toward the King's men just now, do we? And that makes us dislike anything English. In truth, I think we Dutch all have an inherited dislike toward them, and the least injustice on their part brings it out."

Just at this moment the door of the house opened through which a broad glow of firelight streamed, throwing into strong relief the form of the woman standing

there. Her close crimped cap, long-waisted gown with exceedingly short petticoat, her housewife[1] with its scissors and pincushions and keys all proclaimed her Dutch ancestry. At sight of her the boy called:

"Back again, Mother. And a guest I have brought thee. A little girl it is who was lost in the Meadows."

"A little girl lost in the Meadows!" ejaculated the mother, stepping from the door quickly. "A bad place it is to be lost in, and that is the truth. Come in, my child. Ah! how weary and woebegone thou dost look. Come! a warm posset will I give thee, and put thee to bed. Come!"

And Kitty, her heart glowing with the warmth of the welcome, entered the house gladly. The room into which the door from the piazza opened proved to be both living-room and kitchen. It was now all of a ruddy glow from the crackling fire of nut-wood which blazed in the deep-throated fireplace. Before it stood a large table upon which the supper was spread. In one corner of the room stood a spinning-wheel, and beside it lay a bag of wool waiting to be spun. Opposite the fireplace was a small dresser upon which were shining rows of pewter. The floor was scrubbed to immaculate whiteness, and well sanded. About the walls hung gay festoons of dried apples, peaches, and strings of Indian corn mingled with the gaud of red peppers. Beside the fire was a great settle on which lay an old man, the old-

[1] Pronounced huswife.

est, Kitty thought, that she had ever seen. He rose totteringly to his feet as she entered the room, and glanced questioningly at his daughter and grandson.

"Father," said Newty Timm's mother, speaking in Dutch, "this little one hath been found in the Meadows by Newty. She was lost. Bid her welcome, and then draw up to the table. Supper waits."

"Is she of the pure race?" demanded the old man, rising with the help of his cane, and bending forward to gaze searchingly at the little girl.

"Yes," answered Kitty, going to him with pretty friendliness. "I am Dutch; my father and my mother were Dutch; Grandmother is Dutch, and Grandfather too, though I never saw him. And Aunt Cornelia, and Uncle Jacobus; yes, and Dirck who is my brother is Dutch also. Although if I am Dutch Dirck would be anyway, wouldn't he?"

"Yes, he would be Dutch also," spoke the old man chuckling. He laid a shaking hand on Kitty's bright tresses. "Like a Spring Blummie art thou," he said. "Come, eat, for weary dost thou look. Too small by far art thou to be wandering alone in the Meadows. Why was it permitted?"

"She shall tell us presently," said motherly Mistress Timm. "But first, this posset must she drink else a cold she will have. Drink, eat, and afterward thou shalt tell of the hap."

Kitty drank the steaming drink that was given her,

and then drew up at the table with the others. After all she ate but little. She had been much exhausted by her harrowing experience, and a great weariness soon began to steal over her. In spite of her efforts her head would nod as the warmth of the fire stole away her senses. Seeing her condition good Mrs. Timm arose from the table, and lifted her from her chair as though she were a baby.

"To bed thou must go, lambkin. Newty, dost thou know where the little one lives, and her name? Worried and anxious anent her will her people be, and they must be informed at once of her whereabouts."

"Yes, Mother," answered Newty Timm eagerly. "Her name is Kitty Gerritt, and she lives in the Broad Way near to the English Kirk. I will go to her home."

"But so far it is," murmured Kitty, rousing herself to voice a weak protest. "Ought he to go? So far, and so dark it is too."

"Yes, yes; but the night must not pass without word being taken to thy people. Go then, my son, to Neighbor Van Scoyt, and ask him to drive thee to the home of this little one. The cow will I attend while thou art about the matter."

So it came about that sleepy Kitty was carried by the kind woman to a little dormer chamber up-stairs under the eaves, and put to bed between two large feather ticks where she fell immediately into a heavy slumber, while Newty Timm set forth for the Gerritt home.

CHAPTER VIII

AN ANXIOUS TIME

THE bright sunshine streaming through the east windows fell upon Kitty's bed bathing it in radiance. Presently its rays shone full upon her eyes causing her to blink sleepily. All at once she opened them wide, then sitting up she began to rub them drowsily.

"So late am I," she murmured with a glance at the sunshine. "Whatever will Grandmother say to me when it is the Sabbath, and Kirk morning?"

At this moment her eyes rested upon the sleeve of the night robe that she was wearing, and a puzzled expression came into her face. She felt of it tentatively.

"How came I to have on such a large night-rail?" she mused. "'Tis not mine, nor Grandmother's, nor yet

Aunt Cornelia's —— Oh, the swamp! And Newty Timm! 'Tis his mother's of course, but if it is his mother's how do I come to be in my own room at Grandmother's?"

For she was in very truth in her own room at her grandmother's house in the Broad Way. In her own room over the hall, for there was the door that led to Madame Gerritt's room next to hers. There was the chest upon chest of drawers where her clothes were kept. There was the kas, or Holland cupboard, where a store of linen was being put away for her use when grown. There was the large pier mirror with its sconces for candles, and her mother's portrait hanging beside it where she could see it when first she awakened of a morning. There was the table standing beside her bed with a candlestick of Delft ware holding a green candle of bayberry wax, half burned, on it; and her Heidelberg Catechism beside it. There were the four cane-seated chairs and her own little chair that she had had since she was a baby; the homespun rug on the floor, and her own bed with tester and curtains of blue chintz: all the familiar furnishings that she had known her entire life. As Kitty's glance went around her and trailed back to the nightrobe in frowning bewilderment the door opened to admit the stately figure of her grandmother. Ignoring the steps that stood beside the bed for ascending and descending the little maid jumped nimbly to the floor and ran to her.

" So puzzled am I, Grandmother," she began without waiting for the lady to speak. " Did I dream that Newty Timm's mother put me to bed up-stairs at their house after I had taken a warm posset? Was I really lost in the Meadows? Yet here am I in my own room, with all my things about me. Yet dreamed it I could not; for see now, Grandmother: this rail is neither mine, nor thine."

For answer the lady stooped and gathered the tiny form to her in a close embrace.

" There hath been no dream, my child," she said after a long moment of silence. She kissed the girl tenderly. " No dream. Thou hast been lost in very truth, though we knew not that 'twas in the Lispenard Meadows until Jacobus and Dirck overtook the lad who found thee there."

" Overtook him, Grandmother? Had they been to seek me? I wished that Uncle Jacobus and my brother would come."

" Thou dear one, I make no doubt of it." Madame Gerritt kissed her again. " Yes, they had been to seek thee, and had been looking everywhere for thee since five of the clock yesterday. At that time here came Dirck from the Klock with the boys and girls of the Company saying that he could not find thee though all had searched the slopes of the Kalch Hoek again and again. He was crying, for he feared that in trying to hide from him you had fallen into the Versche Water. He

thought he heard you cry out as though something was wrong, but search as he would he could find no track of thee. Jacobus came up while Dirck was telling of the happening, and at once notified the Crier who took his bell and went through the streets crying for the lost one. Then friends came, and all joined in looking for thee. But as time went by without finding trace of thee Jacobus came to believe with Dirck that thou didst fall into the Klock. They were sadly returning home at length, Dirck almost beside himself with grief, and Jacobus controlling his own sorrow that he might give what he could of comfort to thy brother.

"When they had come to Great George Street they came upon a man and a lad in a wagon which had stopped by the roadside, and the youth was talking with the Town-Crier.

"'For what lost child do you cry, sir?' he was asking.

"'For a little maid, one Catherine Gerritt,' the Crier told him. 'About thirteen years old is she. She hath eyes of blue, is of small build ——' But at this the boy cried out:

"'She is no longer lost, for I have found her. At my house with my mother is she at this very minute. I go to tell her people.'

"On hearing this Dirck ran to him at once. 'Is Kitty found in very truth?' he asked. 'Is she not dead in the Collect?'

"The boy laughed when he heard this. 'Dead?' he said. 'Not any more than thou art. Tired? Yes; but that is all. Thou art Dirck, her brother, art thou not? She told me of thee. Know then, that thy sister is safe with my mother, and I will take you to my house to see.'

"Whereupon, both Jacobus and thy brother seized the lad, and hugged him until he cried for mercy. 'A lad of parts,' Jacobus doth declare him to be. Then Mr. Van Scoyt, the man who was with the good youth and who is known to thy uncle, told him and Dirck to climb in, and he would take them at once to the boy's house. On the way there Hermanus Timm told how he had found thee alone in the swamp, and crying. My lambkin, to think of it!" The lady paused, too much overcome by the thought to proceed. Kitty shuddered as a remembrance of the dark and loneliness of the swamp came to her, and clung to her grandmother tightly. Pretty soon she laughed.

"And did he tell how I rode on Brindle's back to his house, Grandmother? Yes, Grandmother, I rode the cow. Didst thou ever ride one when thou wast a small girl like me? And such a nice cow she was; so gentle, with such a soft, broad back. Not once did she stumble, and so slowly did she walk that it was like being in a cradle to ride her. So funny it seemed, Grandmother, to be riding a cow."

"Yes, yes, it must have been, little one. Well then,

to tell all the happening; so soundly didst thou sleep that thou didst not waken when Jacobus spoke to thee. Then the kind mother of the dear lad who found thee wrapped thee up well, and Jacobus brought thee to me. And never once didst thou show signs of waking; so tired, so very tired thou must have been. And now, my child, hast had thy sleep out? All await anxiously to see thee, concerned as to thy well-being. Let me help thee to dress, thou wee one, and then down-stairs we will go to them."

With her grandmother's assistance Kitty was soon dressed. Beyond a feeling of languor and a slight pallor she was feeling and looking almost quite herself. Almost as gaily as usual she ran down the stairs to the dining-room, keeping up a lively chatter all the way. Almost, not quite, herself; for experience leaves its mark, and never again would Kitty Gerritt be so merry and thoughtless, and so utterly devoid of fear as she had been.

The entire family, including the slaves, had assembled to greet her. In Dutch families the servants were regarded, and regarded themselves, as part and parcel of the family, and mingled familiarly with its members. They shared in the joys and the sorrows, and only under the stress of dire misfortune would their owner part with them. Therefore, Kitty would have known that something was wrong had not the slaves been waiting to greet her as well as her brother, uncle and aunt. The

older darkies grinned for joy as they saw her, and the young ones capered about delightedly while 'Minta, Kitty's own girl, was blubbering with gladness. There came a cry from Dirck as she entered:

"Is it that you have come at last, Kitten? I thought that you had fallen into the Collect." He swept her into a bearlike hug as he spoke. The lad was pale with deep shadows under his eyes. "Myself I will never forgive for not keeping you close to me," he added.

"But your fault it was not, Dirck," declared Kitty, returning his embrace with interest. "The fault was with me. I wanted to hide so that you could not find me. Oh, my brother, I was fearful that never again should I see you."

"And I you," murmured the boy brokenly.

"There, lambkin! come now to me," exclaimed Jacobus, catching her to him tenderly. "To the Meadows thou shouldst not have gone. Dangerous are they for anyone, and a small little one should not have gone there alone."

"But I went not there on purpose," spoke Kitty, glancing up at him in surprise. "I ran there because I was so frightened that I knew not where I was going. I believed that I was going straight to Dirck."

"And what frightened thee, little one?" queried Jacobus quickly as he passed the little girl on to Cornelia to be embraced and kissed.

"Why, the shot," answered Kitty astonished. She thought that the family had heard the whole of the happening.

"The shot? What shot? Dirck, you spoke naught of any shooting?" Jacobus turned upon his nephew questioningly.

"There was a shot, but naught did I think of it," was the boy's reply. "It was so far away, Uncle Jacobus, that I see not how it could have frightened Kitty. It sounded off in a ravine where none of us would think of hiding."

"But there is where I did hide," interposed Kitty. "You said that I could not hide so that you could not find me, and I thought that I would show you. But I was just about to slip back and creep up on you unawares to give you a good scare when the sailor shot at me."

"The sailor shot at you?" exclaimed Jacobus, springing to his feet so suddenly that the dishes on the table rattled, and the slaves from the doorway looked at him affrighted. "My child, what are you saying? Who shot at you?"

"The sailor," repeated the little maid tremblingly. She had never heard her uncle speak in such a tone before. "The King's man it was. The one whose arm I hurt that day, you remember?"

"Tell me the whole matter from the beginning," he commanded. "Nay, little one, tremble not. 'Tis not

with you that I am angry, but with anyone who would bring harm to you. Come to me!"

And from the shelter of his arms Kitty related the whole of the happening from the time that she had hidden in the ravine until she had fallen asleep in Mrs. Timm's dormer chamber. Breakfast was forgotten as they listened: Jacobus with stern, set face, without comment of any sort; Dirck, with blazing eyes and clenched fists; the two women with tears. When Kitty had finished the telling Jacobus put her gently from his knee, then rose, determination written on his features.

"Cornelia, Mother, to Kirk I go not this morning. To the Fort I go to see Lieutenant-Governor Colden. Surely there is something that can be done anent this matter! Surely he will not countenance such attacks upon his people. His own fellow-citizens are we, and with a high office has the Council entrusted him. Let him use it then for our benefit, and not for such ruffians as these of the King's navy. What next, what next we will have to endure only God alone knows. Is it not enough that the King's soldiers are thrust into our houses for us to keep without our consent? Is it not enough that every King's man can enter our homes, or shops, at pleasure, pleading the right of search? Is not the Stamp Act enough? Is it not enough that our prisons are broken into by blustering, swaggering soldiers to release officers jailed for just debt? Are not

these things sufficient affront that our children cannot enjoy a little outing without being fired upon? Is ——"

"My son, control thyself," pleaded his mother, going to him.

"Mother, I will not. I cannot. I go to Cadwallader Colden to see if aught he will do anent the matter. If he will not ——" He paused significantly.

"Do naught that is rash, Jacobus," counseled Madame Gerritt gravely. "Naught is gained by rashness. Meantime,—is there aught you wish done, my son?" As Jacobus stopped abruptly and faced them again.

"Yes; 'tis but to advise that all go to the Kirk as usual. The little one also if she is able to attend. The report of her being lost hath been widely noised about the city, and the friends are anxious. 'Tis well to set the rumor at rest, but say naught concerning the sailor. Treat the matter as though being lost were all of it. Dirck, I will look to you for your sister's well-being."

The boy turned a woebegone face toward him.

"Uncle, in my care when failed I have? What sort of a protector hath she in me when all this happened with me close to her?"

Jacobus left the door and came to his side quickly, laying his hand on his shoulder. He saw that the lad stood in sore need of comfort.

"Blame not thyself, lad. No one could have foreseen the happening. The blame lies deeper than mere lack of watchfulness. It goes back to the differences

with the King; for no man of the Navy, or of the Army would dare do this thing were he not encouraged in his actions by his government. No colonist can think, from this time forth, that any place is safe from a King's man after that man threatens him. This might have occurred had I myself been in your place. But, boy, we have had our warning. From this time on let us be not lacking in vigilance."

Dirck squared his shoulders.

"Yes," he said. "Let us not be lacking. I will do my best, and that is the truth, Uncle Jacobus. Again I will not fail to guard my sister. Rather will I suffer mishap myself than permit harm to befall her."

"I know. I trust you, my boy." Uncle and nephew exchanged a close hand-clasp, and then Jacobus left them.

Kitty was glad when the Kirk was over and they were once more at home. She was kissed and made much of, and asked over and over about her misadventure until it seemed to her that she would never cease relating it. The ordeal was indeed trying, and it was a very tired little girl who entered the house after the Kirk was over. So wan she looked that her grandmother declared that she must be given some treacle and put to bed.

The wait for Jacobus proved an extended one. It was long past the noon hour before his return. One glance at his face told that his mission had been unsatisfactory.

"Straight to the Fort I went," he began at once without waiting to be questioned. "'Twas difficult to enter because it was the Sabbath, and the sentinel said that the Governor could not be disturbed on such a day. At length, however, I prevailed upon him to let me pass, and reached the Governor's house just in time. For he was in the act of entering his coach to drive to Kirk. He objected to receiving me on business on account of the day and the unseasonableness of the hour. It was not without demur that he presently consented to hear me, and then we went into his private study where I laid the whole matter before him. Ah! a shilly-shallying man he is! Afraid to move in anything that he thinks will not be to the liking of the Crown. Ah!" Jacobus paused in disgust.

"He grows old, my son," reproved his mother. "Cadwallader Colden hath not always been afraid to move, but times are truly troublesome. What with this Stamp Act agitation I make no doubt but that the poor man hath his hands full."

"So he said, Mother. And he also said —— Little one, thou art sure that 'twas the sailor who shot at you? Might not there have been a mistake? Could you have imagined the happening?" Jacobus turned to his niece who lay on the settle.

"Mistaken, Uncle Jacobus?" Kitty opened wide her blue eyes. "Why, I saw the man as plainly as I see you now. I was not expecting to see him at all. I

thought it was a hunter at first, because you had read of the happening in Mr. Bayard's woods last week in the *Mercury,* but when I turned I saw the sailor with a gun." She shuddered and turned pale at the remembrance.

"There, lambkin! Uncle Jacobus knew that you had made no mistake. 'Twas the Governor's idea, though he admitted that the King's men of both the army and the navy were guilty of many overt acts toward the colonists. But he said that we ourselves were insubordinate to the King and Parliament in not receiving the stamps, and in the stand we had taken with regard to taxation. Moreover, he said that he had no jurisdiction over the men of the navy, who were a law unto themselves when on the high seas, and recognized no authority save that of their officers. Sir Henry Moore, the new governor, would arrive soon, and he would be glad to turn over the office to him, as he was finding it burdensome in the extreme. He did promise to advise the captain of the *Dolphin* to have a care as to the actions of his men, and that any new overt act on their part toward me, or mine, should be reported to the King himself. With that I had to content me. Ah!"

"Well, then, what is to be done?" asked Madame Gerritt anxiously.

"The Lieutenant-Governor did say that it would be the part of wisdom to look well after the child, as the man seemed to feel vindictively toward her. So a dog

will I get, Mother. A dog that shall be fierce toward strangers. And from school must the little one stay until we deem her safety assured. Nay, little one, utter no protest; for in this I will not be gainsaid."

"'Twas about the dog that I was going to speak, dear uncle. I wish not to go to school if thou and Grandmother think best for me to stay at home." Kitty spoke quite meekly for her. Already her experience was bearing fruit, and she had been too thoroughly frightened to object to any measure proposed for her safety.

"Well then, stay close to the house until the ship sails. Go not even to the river's bank in the garden alone, little one."

"I will not, Uncle Jacobus."

For a moment Madame Gerritt was alone with her son. She stayed him as he was about to leave the room.

"What is it, Jacobus? Why dost thou feel so toward the Governor?"

"Mother, he believes not that it happened. He thinks that the little one but imagined the whole affair. I told him of the coil in the store, and that Marinus Willett and Hermann Van Brun could testify to the occurrence. He said that he had no doubt but that it was all as I said, but that that affair had so worked on the child's mind that she had imagined this. He thought that mayhap a hunter had been careless, and that natu-

rally she mistook him for the sailor. What think you, Mother?"

His mother shook her head.

"If Kitty says that it occurred, why then it did, my son. Always hath she been taught to speak no word that was not truth, and the child is exceedingly careful in what she tells. Never have I known her to be guilty of deceit in any form. Even in her little naughtinesses she hath not tried fibbing to conceal them. Jacobus, it happened exactly as the child hath told us. The little white lambkin!"

"So think I, Mother. And now let the wight look to himself. But one more overt act toward her, and suffer he shall even though I be sent to England in chains for it."

"Have a care, Jacobus. Watchful we will be, and careful, but embroil thyself no further with the King's men if thou canst avoid it."

"Yes, if I can avoid it," and Jacobus turned from her.

The lady sighed as she gazed after him. It was not often that anything disturbed his serenity. He was a large man, slow to anger, but once kindled his wrath was fearful. All their little world seemed topsy-turvy, she reflected. The sweet peace and quiet of the family would be gone forever if Jacobus were to move openly against the sailor. Feeling was bitter against the colonists, and the King's men would unite in testifying

against the rash man who moved against one of their number. What chance did a man stand for a fair trial when trial by jury was denied the colonists? So it was with thoughtful brow that the lady once more entered the drawing-room where Kitty lay enthroned upon a settle with Dirck and Aunt Cornelia hovering near her.

CHAPTER IX

AS MIGHT HAVE BEEN EXPECTED

THE very next day Jacobus brought home a dog. A large Newfoundland of true breed, black and white in color. He was a noble creature, standing thirty inches high at the shoulders, with great head and a massive bushy tail curled upwards at the extremity. Kitty gave an ecstatic cry at sight of him, and flung herself on the floor beside him.

"Oh, Uncle Jacobus, is he in truth to be my own?" she exclaimed, caressing the dog's head. "See now! friends we are already."

"Yes, your own he is, Kitty." Jacobus regarded the large animal and the small girl with a smile of approval. "And everywhere with you must he go."

"Let me have him a minute, Kitten," pleaded Dirck, who had been trying to get close to the dog, but so absorbed was Kitty in her new protector that he had

been forced to cease his efforts. "What a fine fellow he is!"

"Isn't he?" cried Kitty, greatly pleased. "And see, Dirck! me he likes already." For the dog had laid his great head against her arm, and was looking up at her with wistful, wondering eyes. "Oh, you dear doggie! a name you must have! Let me see! something nice it shall be. Oh! Lovey would be sweet."

"'Lovey!'" Dirck looked his disgust. "Like a girl that is. Dreadful 'twould be to call such a noble fellow 'Lovey.' 'Lovey!'" he repeated sniffing scornfully.

"'Twas all that I could think of, Dirck." Kitty was by no means abashed by her brother's disapproval. "I don't think it's bad at all. Do you, Uncle Jacobus?"

Jacobus Gerritt laughed.

"Well, then, I'll tell you," he said. "Bad 'twould not sound for you, a little girl, to call him so, for such names come naturally to girls. But Dirck now! Dirck is different. 'Twould not come well from either man or boy to call a dog such a name. Then, too, the animal to be so called should be a small one. 'Lovey!'" He laughed again.

"It sounds well when you say it," flattered Kitty. "Of course, though, I'll call him something else if you and Dirck would rather. I shall not mind at all. He is a dear dog, and I shall love him."

"That is right, Kitten. Love him, of course; you

can't help but love him." Dirck was fondling the animal's ears as he talked. In common with most boys he delighted in dogs. "I don't believe that there is another like him in the whole town. Mr. Nicholas Bayard hath a mastiff that stands as high, but is not so broad as this dog. Don Alexander says that he hath ——" Dirck paused abruptly, for, as he uttered the word "Don," the dog gave a short bark, and looked up expectantly. "Why, I do believe that his name is 'Don!'" cried the lad excitedly. "Don? Don? Is that it, old fellow?"

For answer the dog barked joyously and began to frisk about him. Jacobus regarded his nephew keenly.

"Dirck," he said, "how doth it come that chanced upon that name you have? Didst hear me talking with Mr. Alexander? 'Twas from him that I bought the animal. There were several dogs to choose from; some hounds and setters that came to him by the last ship, but none among them suited me. Then he brought forth this dog, saying that he was the very one for me, and that his name was 'Don.' He said also that being of English breed he would naturally be fond of English beef." And he exchanged a smile with his mother.

"Don Alexander goes to our school, Uncle Jacobus. He told me of a new dog that his father had, but he did not say what his name was. This dog reminded me of what he said about their new one. I knew not that you bought him from his father."

"Yes; well then, that explains everything, and 'Don' shall be his name. Methinks he likes it."

Secretly Kitty did not like it. On several occasions, therefore, when alone with the creature, she called him "Lovey," but the dog did not respond, evidently sharing Dirck's objection to anything so feminine. Willy-nilly she was obliged to call him "Don." He seemed at home with the family and the place at once, and became Kitty's constant companion and playfellow. Brother and sister vied with each other in petting him, and the dog returned their affection.

"But he likes you best, Kitten," observed Dirck, half enviously when the dog had been with them a few days. He had been trying without success to coax Don from Kitty's side. "I am just as fond of him as you are, yet me he favors not when you are near. Why, I wonder?"

"'Tis because I am a little girl, Dirck," explained his sister sagely. "Don knows that Uncle Jacobus bought him to look after me, so he does it. Boys are so strong that they don't need looking after as girls do." She cast an admiring glance at her brother's tall form as she finished speaking.

"That is the truth, Kitten," answered Dirck, trying hard not to show how pleased he was at the words. "Boys can take care of themselves. I am glad that I am not a girl."

"Well then, glad am I too that a girl you are not,"

laughed she. "I like to be one, but I wouldn't want you to be anything but my brother, Dirck."

"And I wouldn't want to be anything but your brother," replied the boy with unwonted tenderness. Kitty's peril was bringing forth all his manhood. "Come, Kitten! let's have a run with Don in the garden. There is just time before to school I must go."

"Oh! I wish that the *Dolphin* would sail away so that to school again I could go. A whole stocking have I knit since from school I have stayed, and Grandmother hath prepared a sampler for me to work, while Aunt Cornelia thinks the time may be improved by learning to make Flemish lace; so she hath set up some on the needles for me. Better do I like to play with you and Don than to knit or sew."

"But from Mr. Smith's History you have not to copy," consoled her brother.

A ripple of laughter rose to Kitty's lips.

"Dear Miss Clementina! what a good school she will have without me. There will be no 'mischievous young lady' to vex her, or to cause her to say, 'Fie, for shame, Catherine!' Oh, Dirck, such a fine time she must have without me! And the history! Not once will Mr. Smith's be opened. But here 'tis easy to be good with Grandmother."

Up and down the garden they ran, until at length, flushed and breathless, they entered the summer-house to rest. Don stretched himself at Kitty's feet as boy

and girl sat down on one of the benches. Presently Dirck's glance wandered to the river, then across to the Jersey heights, and an expression of satisfaction crossed his face.

"Glad am I that we live on this side of the town, and not on the Sound River," he remarked. "I like the water, and the hills, and all this." He waved his hand boyishly at the lordly Hudson and the distant Palisades.

"Grandmother says that when Great-grandfather built this house here there were those who wondered at him. At that time most everybody liked the Sound River best. 'Tis beautiful, Dirck, though I like our side much better. How many oyster boats there are on the water to-day!"

"The oyster boats are further down, Kitten. These boats are either fishermen's boats, or pleasure craft. Near the islands in the bay are the oyster beds. If we go down to the river side we can see the oystermen at work." With this the two ran down to the water's edge, Don capering about them.

"Is not that a pretty shallop, Dirck?" spoke Kitty, indicating a small boat that came into view at that moment. "The one just turning the point. I have seen it before. Grandmother and I watched it yesterday. We thought it an oyster boat though she did say that 'twas o'er far from the shore to gather them."

"It certainly is going far out if it is going after oysters." remarked the youth, eyeing the craft critically.

" 'Tis not an oyster boat, Kitten. Its build is that of a pleasure boat, although it might be an officers' boat from a ship. Yet if either a pleasure boat or a ship's boat, why do its men carry oystermen's tongs? A strange boat it is to me, and methought that every boat on the North River was known to me. Why, that's queer!"

The boy's brows drew together in frowning perplexity as the boat veered suddenly from its northward course, and made directly for the shore where they were standing. For a brief moment only the lad watched the manœuvre, and then catching his sister's hand, he half dragged her, half ran with her some distance from the water's edge, stopping a short way from the house. As he turned to look again at the boat the men in it dropped anchor, and let a pair of oyster nippers, about thirty feet long, drop into the water.

" Why did you run, Dirck?" questioned Kitty when she had recovered from her astonishment.

" I liked not the way those men made for this shore," answered Dirck, looking sheepish. " It may be all right; of course it is all right, but it's just as well for us to be careful. Anybody who hath a boat is privileged to fish for oysters anywhere on the river, but—I wish I knew to whom, or to what ship, that boat belongs."

" Lieutenant-Governor Colden would say that you were letting your wits wander," Kitty told him laughing, her manner all at once becoming that of an elderly man. She shook her finger at the lad with a serious

wag of her head. " 'I fear me, Master Dirck, that thou hast maggots working in thy brain. Or, perchance, thou art threatened with an attack of megrims. Hast tried tea of Jesuits' bark? I would recommend a dose of some simple. I make no doubt but that thy grandmother hath something that will do thee good.' "

Dirck laughed, but half-heartedly.

" Where did the boat go when you and Grandmother saw it, Kitten? "

" Up the river and back, near this side, and then on the Jersey side, just as it is doing to-day. It was quite close to the shore when Don and I were out here for a run."

" Kitten, don't come out here alone. Not even with Don." The lad was very earnest, and exceedingly grave. " Someway, I don't believe that that boat is all right. Its actions make me uneasy."

" But the men in it are not dressed as sailors, Dirck." Kitty was as grave now as he, for she saw that he was apprehensive.

" Yes; that was so. Still, 'tis better to be too careful than not enough so."

" Oh, Dirck! but such a lonesomeness it all makes. I must not go to school. I must not go on the street. I must not play here in the garden. I must do naught but sew or knit. Alida Drew asked me yesterday why I did not go with the girls any more, and she said that I was tied to Grandmother's apron string."

"Spiteful is Alida to speak so, Kitten. I make no doubt but that many wonder why you are kept so close. Perchance 'twill not be much longer, so a good heart you must keep."

"That was so, Dirck. And naughty am I to feel bad about doing what is for my own good. I will be better, and not mind what Alida says."

With this they turned and went toward the dwelling, but more than once Dirck glanced back at the little boat which still lay at anchor a short distance from the shore.

The days passed. Days of anxiety and care. Both Jacobus and Dirck kept watch of the river, but after seeing the shallop at work Jacobus declared that there was nothing suspicious about her. Despite this, and the fact that there seemed to be no real cause for alarm, Dirck appeared unable to shake off a feeling of uneasiness regarding it.

One morning, about two weeks later, Madame Gerritt said to Kitty:

"Go now, little one, to the kitchen and ask Johanna to sit with thee on the stoop, there to watch for the Tea Water Wagon. Out of good water are we, and there is none to compare with that which comes from the Tea Water Pump. Missed the wagon for several days have I, and have had to send Tom to get water from Comfort's Well which I do not esteem so highly. Johanna will be with thee, and Don, so that thou wilt be safe, and thou canst enjoy the air, too."

After all the good lady did not get the water she so much desired. Scarcely had Kitty, the negress and Don taken their stations on the stoop when the little girl descried her uncle coming rapidly down the Broad Way. With him was Dirck, and both seemed excited over something. Kitty ran into the living-room where her grandmother and Aunt Cornelia sat.

"Here come Uncle Jacobus and Dirck, Grandmother," she cried. "What can the matter be that Dirck from school comes so early?"

"And Jacobus from the store, and no dinner ready," gasped Cornelia, ever mindful of her meals.

Just at this moment the two entered the room with beaming faces. Jacobus caught up Kitty and kissed her.

"Good news," he cried in ringing tones. "The *Dolphin* sailed this morning. Out of the harbor did I watch her go. I, and Marinus Willett, and Hermann Van Brun. On the Battery we stood until she passed through the Narrows. So now all is well, and will be as before the trouble. Two men were taken by force, and carried off with the vessel. Hermann Van Brun knows of the manner of their capture and will presently come to tell us of it. All the city rejoices at the departure of the ship, for her stay hath been one of turmoil and annoyance to the citizens. Cornelia, to dinner will Hermann stay."

Cornelia was up and out in the kitchen immediately.

Madame Gerritt was smiling but there were tears in her eyes also. Dirck had caught Kitty around the waist, and the two were capering about the room in a wild sort of dance, Don barking and frollicking after them as though understanding everything. Kitty laughed as Dirck struck up a rollicking sailor song that he had heard on the wharves:

"I murdered William Moore,
As I sailed, as I sailed;
I murdered William Moore,
As I sailed, as I sailed;
I murdered William Moore,
And I left him in his gore
Not many leagues from shore,
As I sailed."

"Such a song," gurgled the little girl gaily. "Oh, Dirck, a pirate one would think you were to hear it."

"The sailors all sing it, Kitten, and it is said that Captain Kidd was fond of it. So maybe it is a pirate's song. Some day we will go to see the house where Captain Kidd lived. It is in Tienhoven Lane."[1]

So with laughter and song they expressed their gladness. The feeling of uneasiness that had hung over the household was dispelled, and joy prevailed. Fear is an enemy to happiness and none of them realized how much they had feared until the cause of that fear was removed. Jacobus did not return to the counting-house for the

[1] Now Liberty Street. The English called it Crown Street.

afternoon, and Dirck stayed home from school. The whole family made merry.

Later came Hermann Van Brun to tell of the kidnapping of the two men who had been carried aboard the King's ship, and to voice his indignation at the proceeding. But the *Dolphin* had sailed, and for a time at least they hoped for peace.

"Until the next ship of the King enters the harbor," observed Jacobus with bitterness. "None knoweth what then may befall; so let us be glad while we may."

"Why not go to the King's Arms Tavern to-night to the concert?" suggested Hermann Van Brun. "There are to be fireworks after the music which the children will enjoy. See! in Mr. Holt's *Weekly Post-Boy,* which I have brought with me, is an account of the entertainment to be given. 'Twill be the last time fireworks will be shown this season in the garden, though the concerts will take place every Tuesday and Thursday evenings in the long room throughout the winter."

"If the *Post-Boy* says that there are to be fireworks, then go we shall," said Jacobus. "The little one hath had to be in the house for some time, and will enjoy it. Doth it interest you, children?"

"Fireworks, uncle?" shouted Dirck and Kitty in unison. Children of the period delighted in pyrotechnic displays as greatly as do children of a later time. "Yes, yes!"

"Oh, they will be small ones, I make no doubt; but

even small ones are pleasing. Let me see: the advertisement says that they are to be in charge of the Italian Brothers, Pietro, who will also perform on the slack rope. We must not be late. The concert is to begin at half after six o'clock. Now off with you to get ready."

With a gleeful shout brother and sister were half-way up the stairs before he had finished speaking. Jacobus gazed after them with an indulgent smile.

"So good they feel to have no fear," he remarked. "Ah! how glad I am that all is well once more."

Kitty dressed quickly, thinking to be ready before anyone. When she came down-stairs, however, she found Dirck there before her.

"How nice you look, Kitten," spoke the boy, gazing at his sister admiringly.

"Do I, Dirck?" Kitty turned about for his inspection, well pleased at the compliment. She was indeed very sweet and dainty in the usual child's costume of the period. Her dress of blue lutestring consisted of a sort of half frock, half coat, with embroidered undervest, reaching to the knees; blue silk stockings and little rosetted slippers with high heels. Her hair, like Dirck's, was unpowdered, and hung in curls upon her neck and bare shoulders. "And you look nice, too, my brother."

"Oh! a boy doesn't ever look that, Kitten." Dirck, brave in brown velveteen coat with breeches to match, stockings with brown clocks, and a brown beaver well

looped up, tried hard to appear indifferent. Madame Gerritt, very stately in a gown of black velvet, entered at this moment with Cornelia, who was charming in a dress of brocade and lace. Jacobus followed them smiling approval at the appearance of his family.

"There will be no others there who will compare with my own family," he said with pardonable pride. "Dirck, attend well to thy sister. When thou dost offer her thy arm bow deeply. Ah, boy! thou canst do better than that. Let it never be said that a Dutchman rose from bowing before the lady was through courtesying. So! that was better. Now then, we will start."

New York was a merry-making, pleasure-loving little town, with numerous taverns and tea gardens to cater to its amusement. Every tavern had its long room devoted to banquets, assemblies, social clubs and dinings. Some had delightful gardens attached which were illuminated in summer evenings and refreshments served under the trees. Oftentimes guests were entertained by strolling troupes of acrobats, or exhibitions of legerdemain, or, as in the present instance, fireworks. For the most part the taverns were frequented by what was known as the Governor's set; that is, the Fort being the seat of government, was naturally the centre of social life, with the Governor and his lady at the head and most prominent in everything. It was the most fashionable and lively set of the town. It consisted of the Governor, his Council, and many of the members of Trinity

Church, which was the fashionable congregation. They formed a more or less distinct society, affecting London ways, dining at the extreme hour of four, loving cards, dances, and fox-hunting. Among them came and went certain of the Dutch families, and many of the French; the Dutch, English and French being the three leading social elements.

The Gerritts were not often seen at the taverns, but it was hardly possible to hold aloof from all contact with the English set where high and low mingled in every-day pursuits and amusements. Jacobus liked far better the meetings in the Province Arms where the Whigs were wont to congregate, and the Coffee House of the Exchange, where the merchants met together, but this being a gala occasion extraordinary means were necessary to celebrate it.

The little party proceeded to the tavern on foot. It was not far, and there were many well-dressed people moving in the same direction. The street, too, was filled with coaches, chaises, and sedan chairs; all society seemed bound for the King's Arms Tavern.

Soon they came to the long, low building of the tavern. It was two stories in height with broad piazzas shaded by a row of catalpa trees. Being near the Fort it was a favorite resort with the English officers. An added attraction was a cupola surmounting its top where an excellent telescope had been installed which afforded a good lookout.

The concert was just beginning when they entered the long room of the tavern, and Dirck and Kitty sat down quietly with their elders to listen. Both were fond of music, but they were eager for the fireworks, and it was not often that New York children were afforded opportunity to witness such a display as was promised. So, when at length the concert was ended and the proprietor requested the company to adjourn to the garden where the exhibition was to take place, the two were on their feet instantly. At the same moment there came a sudden rush of the people, all being possessed of the desire to gain the most advantageous positions to witness the display, and in the confusion Dirck and Kitty were separated from their party. Nothing daunted, Dirck put his arm about the little girl and followed in the wake of the crowd. When they succeeded in entering the garden, however, the crowd was so dense that neither boy nor girl could so much as get a glimpse of what was going on. Save a view of the rockets when they exploded in the air they could see naught, and were tantalized by the applause of the people who could see.

"Oh, Dirck," wailed Kitty almost in tears, "it hath been of no use to come after all; for see them we cannot."

"If only we had not lost Uncle Jacobus," lamented the boy. He was as bitterly disappointed as his sister, but was striving not to show it. "He would find a place for us I doubt not. If, too, we could get in front

of the people it would not prevent them from seeing because they could look over our heads. Perchance I can get a place for you anyway, Kitten. 'Twould be shameful for you to miss seeing them."

At these words a man standing just ahead of them turned round with a smile.

"You are very gallant, Yong-heer," he said. "Methinks for that you deserve a reward. Know then, that by following the lane which runs by the side of the garden to the river you will find a fine vantage point where you will be able to see all that is to be seen. True, the view will be from the side instead of from the front; true also that the garden at that place is not illuminated, but that will be no objection so far as the fireworks are concerned."

"Thank you, sir," said the boy gratefully. "Darkness we shall not mind, nor yet the view from the side if we may but see the fireworks. I liked not to have my sister disappointed, such store hath she set upon seeing them."

"You are kind to help us, sir," added Kitty, her dimples coming and going. "I could not keep back the tears, so much did I wish to see the fireworks. And now we may."

"And now we may," spoke Dirck, turning with her toward the shrubbery where the lane began. "Again, sir, we thank you."

The garden was separated from the lane by a tall

hedge which was so dense that the shadows lay heavy and dark along its entire length. A short distance from the river the hedge came to an abrupt end, and the garden could be entered by passing around the shrubbery. Because it was free from the crowd the boy and girl chose this route instead of trying to make their way through the garden, and soon found themselves in a sequestered spot at the end of the lane where a good view of the platform where the fireworks were set off could be had.

It was dark under the trees, as the man had said it would be. There was much shrubbery, and the illumination of the garden being made by lanthorns hung about their light was too feeble to penetrate the thick shadows thrown by the foliage. But, unmindful of the darkness or the fact that they were quite remote from the rest of the people, brother and sister stood watching the display with wonder and delight. Kitty gasped as a firepiece representing a wheel illuminated with white, red and yellow fires began to whirl rapidly about. Eight rockets followed which burst into stars, snakes, and crackers, succeeded in turn by a Chinese Fountain. A grand finale of a Tournament of Fire and Ten Rockets concluded the exhibition.

"Well then," said Dirck in a tone of satisfaction, "that was, methinks, worth seeing. Would we could witness such every night."

Kitty drew a long breath.

"Oh, Dirck, was it not fine? I, too, would like to see such things every night."

"Perchance I wouldn't want them every night, Kitten, though I see not how anyone could tire of them. But after all there is my Glee Club. I'd like to have that sometimes, you know?"

"Yes; and our parties whenever any of the Company hath a birthday. Grandmother says that when we have too much of anything we get tired of it. Grandmother may be right. Still, come again to-morrow night I would an' I could."

"And so would I," acknowledged the lad. "Art cold, Kitten?" For Kitty was shivering in the October air though the weather was very mild.

"'Tis because we are so near the river," said Kitty, drawing her cardinal close about her. "Are we going back through the lane, Dirck? 'Tis so dark that way."

"But we can get back to the tavern more quickly than if we go through the garden, Kitten. Uncle Jacobus will be looking for us, and 'tis best to go right back to the long room where we lost him. Mind the darkness you did not when we were coming here."

"I didn't think about it then, Dirck." Kitty took hold of Dirck's arm as they started back through the lane. "Glad am I that the *Dolphin* hath sailed," she said, suddenly casting an apprehensive glance about them as they were passing a thick clump of bushes.

"Had it not I should fear that those sailors might be lurking somewhere in these trees."

"What a little goose you are," said Dirck teasingly. "What could hurt you while I am so close to you?" He laughed as he saw how near she had drawn to him.

But the laugh died on his lips as four men stepped from the dense shadows of the shrubbery and came toward them. Their aspect was such that the boy instantly scented trouble and stopped short. The men drew nearer, and Dirck glanced around apprehensively. Kitty saw the glance, and took alarm immediately. The lad's hand gripped hers tightly as she clung to him. They were outside the garden in the lane, and should trouble come help could reach them only from one end or the other of the hedge. Almost anything might happen in that time, thought Kitty. Just as this moment one of the men stepped ahead of the other three and spoke. The little girl gasped in terror, for the voice was that of the British seaman who had threatened her. He said:

"You will come with us, young ——"

But Dirck broke in manfully:

"You shall not have her, sirrah. If 'tis reward you want my uncle will give you money, but take my sister you shall not." He put Kitty behind him as he spoke, and faced them defiantly.

"Have that girl? We'll have her if we want her, young fellow; but we don't want her. 'Tis men we

need for the *Dolphin,* and you are one of them. So come along peaceably, and we won't touch the girl. If you don't——" His pause was filled with sinister meaning.

Two of the men advanced toward the brother and sister as the leader finished speaking. With a shriek Kitty flung her arms about Dirck.

"You shall not have him," she cried. "He is my brother! My only brother! Sailed hath the *Dolphin!* My uncle saw her go through the Narrows."

"Sailed? So she hath." The spokesman laughed. "So she hath in very truth, but no further than the lower bay where she awaits our coming. Come along, youngster. For days we have watched for this chance, and we have no time to waste. We have other work."

But as they would have taken hold of him Dirck made a desperate effort and flung off his would-be captors, shouting:

"Uncle Jacobus! Uncle Jacobus!"

"Seize the girl, mates," shouted the leader. "Be quick!"

At this Dirck ceased his struggling and cried out:

"Don't touch her. Let her alone, and I'll go."

"Come on then. Hurry, mates! There is need."

There was need in truth. From the other side of the hedge rose the babel of excited voices, and above them all sounded a hoarse cry from Jacobus Gerritt:

"Kitty! Dirck! Where are you?"

CHAPTER X

A TIME OF TRIAL

It was Kitty who answered him. Kitty who uttered a cry that held appeal and anguish, for the sailors had started off with Dirck despite the fact that she was clinging to him.

"Help! Here, Uncle Jacobus! Be quick! Oh, be quick!"

Upon saying that he would go with the seamen Dirck had tried to unclasp her arms, but hearing his uncle's voice he seemed to take on fresh courage, for he began to struggle anew with his captors. At the upper end of the hedge lights were glimmering, and the forms of men could be seen moving toward them.

Kitty noticed this fact as well as the assailants, and screamed with all her might. The leader stooped sud-

denly, lifted her up, and tore her clinging arms from her brother.

"Loose the boy, mates," he commanded, starting ahead of them toward the river. "We'll take the girl."

But again Dirck ceased his struggles and cried in agonized tones:

"Put her down. Don't hurt her. I'll go; truly I will."

The man turned still holding the little girl.

"Then pass on with the others," he said gruffly. "And mind! no more fooling. Hurry up! I'll put the girl down as you go past."

Dirck stopped as he reached the man and his sister. He was between two of the sailors, who held his arms tightly. The boy leaned over and kissed Kitty tenderly.

"Good-bye, Kitten," he said. "Tell Uncle Jacobus that 'twas my fault. Good-bye!"

"No, no," screamed Kitty, twisting out of the man's grasp and again flinging her arms about her brother. "No, Dirck! thou shalt not."

An ugly look came into the leader's eyes, and he clutched the girl viciously. Seeing this Dirck whispered to her:

"Run back and get Uncle Jacobus, Kitten. He won't let them take me. Run back to him."

"I won't," sobbed Kitty, kicking the man who had caught her up again with all her might. "I won't leave you, Dirck. If they take you they must take me too."

"Go on, mates," shouted the leader. "I'll attend to the girl."

"Don't hurt her," pleaded the boy as the sailors half carried, half dragged him with them toward the river. "Don't hurt her!"

Scream after scream burst from Kitty's lips as she saw her brother's form disappearing in the darkness. She struck at her captor again and again with all the strength that lay in her tiny fists, and kicked with might and main. As the shadows swallowed up all sight of the boy and the sailors the fellow flung her from him with a rough exclamation:

"Lie there, you little vixen," he cried. "I am glad to see the last of you."

And Kitty did lie there. Still and white she lay, for she had fainted. It seemed a long time afterward when she opened her eyes again and looked up to find Jacobus Gerritt bending anxiously over her. And all around and about them stood a number of men, citizens and officers, who had been part of the company at the tavern's entertainment.

"What hath happened, Kitty? Where is Dirck?" queried her uncle with painful anxiety.

For a moment Kitty gazed at him dazedly without replying, and then, as recollection of the dire misfortune which had befallen came to her, she sat up quickly.

"Dirck, Uncle Jacobus! They have taken him. My brother for the King's service."

"The King's service, little one? The *Dolphin* hath sailed, and in the harbor lieth no other ship of His Majesty's. What vessel doth such things as kidnap men but a man-of-war?"

"The *Dolphin* hath not sailed," cried the little maid hysterically. "Oh, Uncle Jacobus, she lies now in the lower bay. So the sailor said. There were four of them. The sailors, I mean, and they took Dirck away with them toward the river. At the foot of the lane where we went to see the fireworks they caught us. Dirck went because he thought they were going to hurt me. Uncle Jacobus, Uncle Jacobus! are you going to let them have my brother?"

"Have him? Have Dirck, my nephew? Never, if I can help it," cried Jacobus, springing to his feet. "My friends, who will bear me company in this enterprise? 'Tis a venture as you all know. If aught goes amiss there may be bloodshed, but go I shall, alone, or with companions."

There was a stir of excitement among the men about uncle and niece as Jacobus made his appeal. Some turned and walked away unwilling to mix in anything that might bring trouble to themselves. About a dozen, however, left the crowd and ranged themselves beside Jacobus. A grim smile lighted up his face at sight of them.

"Ah, I thought so," he remarked simply. "Some there be among us who resent tyranny and its methods.

We are the King's subjects, friends, yet the King's men treat us as though we were the King's enemies. After the boy we go even to the deck of the *Dolphin.* Ye have swords? Yes! Then are ready —— But first; who will take this wee one to her grandmother? Safe she must be, for none knows what may befall if out of sight she be for a moment."

"I, sir," spoke a young fellow coming forward to Kitty's side. He was quite young, about nineteen or twenty years old, though he wore the uniform of a lieutenant in the English Army. Jacobus gave him a searching glance.

"A King's man," he exclaimed with bitterness. "And can I trust a King's man with my lambkin after other King's men have taken her brother?"

"Zounds, sir! we are not all knaves though some such do wear His Majesty's uniform," cried the young lieutenant hotly. "Upon my honor as a gentleman, I will take this little girl safely to her grandmother wherever she may be."

He glanced down at Kitty as he spoke, and Kitty, who had been regarding him earnestly all the time he was speaking, smiled wanly in response; then reached out her tiny hand to him.

"He is kind and good, Uncle Jacobus," she said with pathetic calmness. "I doubt not but that he will in safety take me to Grandmother. I will go with him. Now go, do go after Dirck, Uncle Jacobus."

"Yes, little one, I go now. Come, men! find a boat we must, and then to follow after the sailors."

The young officer had turned with Kitty, but at Jacobus's words he faced about once more.

"There is a periagua at the wharf of the tavern which is mine," he said. "Use it, I pray you. I do not hold with kidnapping either boys or men from the street. The King's service should not find recruits in such manner."

"Sir, I thank you," Jacobus cried gratefully. "I thank you, and I cry you pardon if I have spoken aught of offense. I am sore distraught over this coil which hath involved my children, and hath not wit to weigh my words."

"Say no more, sir," spoke the young fellow generously. "Use the boat and welcome. Perchance you may overtake those who have seized the boy ere they reach the ship. I pray that it may be so. Come, little one! to your grandmother we will go, and as we go unravel this whole matter from the beginning."

Jacobus and his fellows started without further ado for the tavern's wharf, while the officer and Kitty went back through the lane to the tavern. And as they walked Kitty related all of the circumstances from the time that she had helped the old sailor to escape the clutches of the British seamen to the capturing of her brother. A curious crowd had gathered along the lane and in the garden of the tavern. There were many who

would have detained Kitty to question her as to what had occurred, but the lieutenant waved them aside pompously, and because of his uniform the people fell back deferentially. But once did he utter comment on what Kitty told him.

"The King and his ministers are making a mistake," he said. "These provincials are no less Englishmen because they live on this side of the ocean. 'Tis a mistake to treat the colonies as they are doing. 'Tis small wonder that latent rebellion slumbers awaiting only a touch to awaken into fury. And now, little one, a truce to this talk. Tell me where I shall find your grandmother, and what your name might be?"

"My name is Kitty Gerritt, and Grandmother is Madame Gerritt, sir," answered the little maiden. "I think in the long room of the tavern we may find her. Where the concert was held, as no doubt you know. If Grandmother is not there she may be at home. 'Tis not far to my home. Just up the Broad Way."

Her grandmother was in the long room after all. She sat with Cornelia and Hermann Van Brun awaiting Jacobus, who had left them to look for Dirck and Kitty, and was ignorant of what had occurred. At sight of Kitty in charge of an English officer the lady rose hurriedly and came toward the pair.

"What is it?" she cried in alarm, for Kitty, who had been tearless since her recovery from her faint, now burst into bitter weeping. "Where is Dirck?"

But Kitty could not answer for her sobs, and much disturbed over the child's state Madame Gerritt drew her into a close embrace and tried to soothe her. The young officer, seeing Kitty's condition, told simply the whole of the sad happening. A group of excited and sympathizing ladies awaiting the return of their escorts gathered near to hear the recital, uttering exclamations of indignation and commiseration. The grandmother said not a word, but tried to quiet the sobbing girl by caresses. Cornelia wept softly, and Hermann Van Brun questioned the young officer as to what steps, if any, Jacobus was taking in the matter. Presently, when Kitty had become a little calmer, Madame Gerritt arose and said quietly:

"Home now must we go, little one. Jacobus will do what can be done in the matter. Perchance he will bring Dirck back with him. The boy will want to find us there." Her lips quivered, and she seemed on the point of giving way. Controlling herself, however, she thanked the young officer for his services, then drew Kitty toward the door.

Hermann Van Brun followed with Cornelia, and sadly the party returned to the house from which they had set forth so joyously such a short time before. A house of mourning it was now, for none of them hoped to see Dirck again, though not one voiced the fear that grew in their hearts as the hours passed without bringing Jacobus and the boy. Sorrowfully the three sat

waiting, alone now, for Hermann Van Brun had gone forth to learn something of Jacobus. Don crept up close to Kitty and laid his great head against her knee, as though cognizant of the fact that something untoward had occurred.

The hours passed. Neither Madame Gerritt nor Cornelia wished to go to bed, and when it was suggested to Kitty she shook her head, saying:

" If Dirck should come, Grandmother, I would want to know it. Sleep I could not without knowing about my brother."

So no more was said to her anent the matter. At two o'clock a step was heard on the stoop, and Kitty was on her feet instantly. She was at the door and had opened it before either Madame Gerritt or Cornelia had risen from their chairs. Her uncle entered as she held it ajar. He shook his head sorrowfully as she glanced eagerly beyond him to see if her brother stood there.

Jacobus's face was set and stern, and his general appearance disheveled. He sank into a chair and sat without speaking for several moments.

" We sighted a boat containing some sailors," he said at length in a shaking voice. " But if it had Dirck in it he was prone on the bottom of the craft. Methought I heard a cry from it, but get close to the boat we could not. 'Twas a shallop, Kitty. The same, I doubt not, that hath been plying up and down the river of late. The boy had cause to fear it. The night was dark, as

there was no moon, and the shallop showed no light save that in the binnacle. It lay near to the shoals of Love's Island[1] when we first sighted it, and one of our men cried out that it must be the one we were seeking. We veered about, making a direct tack for it, but being a smaller boat the shallop could move more quickly; so it slipped past us in the darkness, going into the kills off Staten Island. We could not follow it there, our boat being too large, so down into the lower bay we went, hoping to catch the shallop as it came through the Great Kill. Failing to do this, we determined to board the *Dolphin*. But no *Dolphin* was in sight. No, nor any vessel, large or small. Art sure, little one, that the man said that the *Dolphin* was in the lower bay?"

"Yes, Uncle Jacobus. He said the lower bay. I cried out that the *Dolphin* had sailed, for you had watched her go through the Narrows; and he said, 'So she hath, but no further than the lower bay, where she lies waiting for us.'"

Jacobus groaned as she paused. "How, or where hath she gone then? There was no boat in sight, and we waited hoping to glimpse the shallop again, but we did not. Ah! woe is me that ever we did venture from this house. Poor Dirck! Poor boy! what can they do with so young a lad? I fear me much that never again shall we see him." He bowed his head upon his arms, and deep sobs shook his form. So completely did he

[1] Now Bedloe's Island.

abandon himself to his grief that the women were awed.

"And had I not wanted to see the fireworks 'twould not have happened," wailed Kitty. She wept no more, for the fountain of her tears was dry, but her woe was the more pitiful. "But that I might see them, we went where he was taken. And he was taken rather than have harm befall me. My poor brother!"

But at this Madame Gerritt rose protestingly.

"Not poor Dirck!" she said in thrilling tones of pride. "Not poor Dirck! Brave Dirck! Noble Dirck! Dirck who would suffer impressment, or other evil, rather than have hurt come to his sister. Dost think such a lad of spirit shall come to harm? Believe it not. There is a God who holds him in the hollow of His hand; a God who slumbers not, nor sleeps. Like his father was Dirck. Did not Joris give his life that the French and Indians might be driven from our frontiers? How could the boy be other than a lad of parts? I glory in Dirck, my little son——" Her voice broke and she could not continue.

But her outburst of pride had a soothing effect upon the others nevertheless. Jacobus raised his head.

"That was so, Mother," he agreed. "I remember now that the lad said that fail again he would not. That rather than have harm come to his sister he would suffer mishap himself. Near to forgetting was I the nobility

of his action. Truth have you spoken, Mother. Again will I not forget."

And from that time forth when Jacobus sought counsel from his friends as to what was best to be done he failed not to dwell on the boy's spirit.

But to Kitty the remembrance of her brother's sacrifice brought no comfort. It seemed to her that the end of everything had come. To the young all things are tragic, and Kitty believed that never again could she laugh and be happy. She missed Dirck so. She had not known what playfellows they were until after he had gone. The relation between them had always been very tender. Doubtless the fact that both father and mother were dead had augmented the feeling. Her grief seemed to grow no less in the days that followed.

In the days that followed, for they passed without bringing word of either Dirck or the *Dolphin*. Lieutenant-Governor Colden declared that he would forward an account of the matter by the next ship to His Majesty, George Third. That, perchance, in view of the lad's tender age, something might be done to accomplish his discharge; but that, on the whole, 'twere best that the matter should rest until the arrival of the new governor, Sir Henry Moore. He, no doubt, would be able to advise something that would procure the youth's release, as he was direct from London and was familiar with affairs at court. And with this the family and friends were forced to be content.

The content was in seeming only. It was such incidents that was arousing the colonists to a knowledge of the injustice of the methods of the mother country. New York blazed with the atrocity of the seizure. That a mere boy, a lad of tender years, should be torn from his family, set the city afire. The citizens went about the streets with grim looks. Were not even their boys safe from the tyranny of Britain? What had happened to Dirck Gerritt might occur to any other lad. A few more such incidents were all that would be required to set the smouldering embers of rebellion flaring into a mighty blaze.

When the French and Indian War had ended a few years previous trade and commerce had revived and a period of remarkable activity had opened, filling the people with hopes of great prosperity. The bright hopes of the merchants and people were turned to gall and wormwood by the acts of Great Britain, who, instead of gratitude for the material assistance given by the colonists in the late war, was now calculating how much revenue might be counted upon from the provinces that had shown such energies and such resources. But the war had shown the colonists what they were capable of doing for themselves. So when England tried taxation, billeting troops, and impressment of seamen it was not weaklings who resented the injustice of her government, but sturdy, self-reliant, wise men. Such were the members of the Stamp Act Congress

which continued in session during the entire month of October; such were the citizens who stood in knots on the streets discussing the situation, for business was at a standstill; such were the merchants who met nightly for debate as to what was to be done, for the stamps were expected daily, and the first day of November was scheduled for their adoption.

CHAPTER XI

THE VOICE OF THE PEOPLE

This eventful October was all but gone. But few of its golden days remained until it would be folded away forever in the Book of Months. In the Gerritt household matters had resumed their customary routine: Jacobus went as usual to the store; Madame Gerritt and Cornelia looked after the well-being of the family; and, save that the presence of Dirck was wanting, everything appeared as formerly. By Jacobus's wish Kitty did not return to school. Indeed, neither Mr. Gerritt nor his mother could rid themselves of a feeling of uneasiness regarding her safety, so the little maid was kept where she could be watched and guarded. If study was lacking, however, her time was not spent in idleness. Even in well-to-do families where there were slaves it

was customary for the daughters of the house to assist in every detail of the work in order that they might become proficient in housewifery. In Kitty's case it was rather with the sweet intent to keep her so busy that she could not indulge in grief for her brother that, at this time, her grandmother and aunt gave her more than her usual number of tasks. Work is a panacea for trouble, but it was long before Kitty understood this wisdom.

The impressment of Dirck Gerritt had caused the little city to buzz with indignation for a while, and then the occurrence was lost sight of in the stirring events that were taking place. Such incidents served but to add fuel to the flame of resentment that was growing against England for the treatment she was according the provinces, and the wrong of the individual was engulfed in the calamity that threatened the many.

This, too, Kitty did not understand, and she was puzzling over it one evening as she slipped out of the drawing-room and crept quietly up-stairs to her own little chamber overlooking the Broad Way. Jacobus was entertaining company: some gentlemen of the Congress who had come for a quiet conference, and who later would be regaled with an oyster supper. Upon such occasions Kitty had been wont to remain in the room as long as her uncle would permit, delighting in the gayety which the grave men ofttimes permitted themselves. Dirck, too, would be present, and they would have great times afterward commenting on what had been said.

The remembrance was more than Kitty could bear, so sick with longing for her brother she went up to her room.

Where was he? she wondered as she climbed upon her high tester bed and buried her face in the pillows. What was happening to him? Perhaps the captain on the *Dolphin* was a cruel man who would use him brutally. She had heard such dreadful tales of officers mistreating the crew of a vessel. And there was shipwreck! The ocean was so big, so wide and deep, at this very moment he might be a castaway. There were so many perils on the sea. And these dire conjectures presently overcame the little maid so that she fell to weeping bitterly. At length the passion of her grief was spent; her sobs grew less frequent, finally ceasing, and she slept.

She was awakened suddenly by the report of a minute gun. It was followed by another and another so rapidly that she started up in terror wondering what was happening. The house was instantly in confusion. There was the sound of excited voices, hurried footsteps, and the opening and closing of doors that told Kitty that her uncle with his guests had gone out on the stoop to learn the cause of the guns discharging. At this she plucked up her courage, and jumping down from the bed, ran to a window, threw it up, and looked out.

There was great commotion in the street. Men ran to and fro, alarmed and fearful of what might be happening; while the people who filled the stoops and bal-

conies of the surrounding houses were excitedly demanding of the persons in the street what the trouble was. Presently above the turmoil came the clatter of a horse ridden at a headlong pace, and eager voices cried:

"An Express! An Express!"

The uproar ceased as the Express drew near, and a tense silence settled upon the crowd as a man shouted suddenly:

"What mean the guns, friend? Hath the *Asia* opened fire upon the town?"

"The guns are the guns of the *Asia,* but they fire not upon the town." The Express tarried only to say, "They announce that the merchant vessel, *Edward,* hath been sighted off Sandy Hook. She comes into the harbor to-morrow morning bearing the stamps."

A groan went up from the multitude at this statement, and the din broke forth again, but this time it was of rage. During a temporary lull in the tumult a cry came from someone in the crowd that was like the clarion call of a trumpet:

"Let the stamps come! We'll never submit to be slaves!"

The people took up the words, echoing and reëchoing them until they became a mighty chorus, and then as one man the crowd broke into a song that had recently become famous:

"With the beasts of the wood, we will ramble for food,
And lodge in wild deserts and caves,

And live poor as Job, on the skirts of the globe,
Before we'll submit to be slaves, brave boys,
Before we'll submit to be slaves."

"The temper of the people is up," Kitty heard her uncle remark as he and his guests reëntered the hall. "They will never allow the stamps to be distributed."

A little frightened by the turbulence Kitty crept back into bed, but it was long before she slept. Everything seemed going wrong, she said to herself. The stamp ship's coming had turned the city upside down, and naught was as it used to be.

"I wish," she said abruptly, and in her earnestness she spoke aloud, "I wish that the stamps I could see. So much trouble have they caused. What are they like, I wonder? Yes; I should like much to see them." And so musing she presently fell asleep.

"Lambkin, thou art not looking well," remarked her grandmother anxiously the next morning, noting the child's languor. "Did the noise in the street disturb thee?"

"Yes, Grandmother; so much there was. I was frightened too until I heard what the matter was."

"To me thou shouldst have come, Kitty. 'Twould not have disturbed me; and now what shall be done anent these pale cheeks?"

"'Tis the air she needs, Mother," spoke Jacobus. "To the store I go not this morning, but to the Battery to see the Stamp Ship come in. Many are going, and

the little one may go with me. You would like it, little one?"

"So much, Uncle Jacobus. Shall we see the stamps? So much do I wish to see them, and what they are like to cause so much trouble."

"No one can see them, Kitty, unless they are distributed," Jacobus told her gravely. "'Tis talked that the distribution will not be permitted. It will go hard with Mr. McEvers to whom they are consigned if he tries it. He hath been warned against it by the citizens. So your wish cannot be gratified, little one, except at the expense of our liberties. But come! early must we start to obtain a good situation to see the ship."

With more animation than she had shown for some days Kitty ran for her calash and cardinal. The mildness of the autumnal days had given place to a cool crispness that was exhilarating, and under its influence Kitty was soon prattling away with some of her old-time vivacity.

"So many people there are who go to see the vessel, Uncle Jacobus. And are all of them against the stamp tax?"

"Scarcely is there one who is not against it, thou wee one. I see not how a man could have a spark of manhood and be for it. Keep close to my side, Kitty. A larger number of people have come down to see the ship than I thought would come."

There were indeed many people. The entire front of the strand was massed with those persons who were curious to see the *Edward* come into the harbor, even the rocks below the batteries being filled with men and boys. It seemed to Kitty that all the town had gathered to watch the ship's incoming. Scotch, French, English, Dutch, Irish, and German: representatives of every race of the cosmopolitan little city, drawn together by the common bond of the infringement of their sacred liberties. Americans in the making.

A derisive groan went up from the multitude as the vessel came through the Narrows. The minute guns of the Fort boomed a welcome, and at this an ominous silence fell upon the people. On came the ship under convoy of a man-of-war and a tender, for it had been deemed best that her incoming should be marked with great parade. Past the islands that lay on the surface of the bay like sentinels guarding the little city she came, sails set gliding before the wind like a thing of life. It was a beautiful sight; but neither the matchless blue of the sky curving over the broad expanse of water, nor the three vessels skimming the bay like birds impressed the people with beauty. The merchant ship brought the stamps which were the death knell of liberty, a fact which effaced the charm of her approach. Child though she was, Kitty felt the solemnity of the occasion, and a thrill of apprehension shook her as the crowd began to murmur.

"Nothing but homespun will I wear," exclaimed a man standing beyond her uncle.

"And I," chimed in his neighbor. "Let us dress in sheepskins with the wool on rather than liberty should perish."

"Right you are, friends," agreed Jacobus, turning toward them. "Yon ship, I fear, brings but the beginning of evils upon us. But, whatever may come, England will find that New York shall do as well as her neighbors."

On all sides such expressions of resentment could be heard. The temper of the people was up indeed. As one man the citizens had risen against the use of the stamps. On came the vessel, anchoring at length directly under the guns of the Fort, presumably for protection. Presently a boat was lowered which soon put off from her for the Battery. At this the gloom that hung like a pall over the assembly was dispelled. There came a stir like the rustle of dead leaves of a forest in a sudden wind; a quickening movement among the people, and then—a headlong rush for the Fort. Kitty had never seen anything like it. Her uncle caught her arm and pressed her close to his side.

"Home you must go, Kitty," he said, drawing her with difficulty out of the seething, surging mass of men. "Trouble there may be, and none knows what may come of this. The people are in a mood of desperation."

Alarmed by the vehemence of the crowd Kitty clung

to his hand tightly as Jacobus forced a passageway for them to the Bowling Green which was comparatively clear of people, and here they came to a stop for rest.

"So crushed is my frock that it looks as though it should be ironed," observed the little girl as soon as she recovered her breath. "Such a crowd, Uncle Jacobus! I knew not that there were so many persons in New York."

"Yes, yes," answered Jacobus absently. "I think so."

"Why, Uncle Jacobus, you did not hear what I said," laughed Kitty. "What is it that you are reading?"

For Jacobus was gazing intently at a placard upon a lamp-post at his side. Kitty let go his hand, and ran close to it to read it.

"PRO PATRIA

"The first man that either distributes or makes use of stampt Paper, let him take care of his House, Person, & Effects.

"VOX POPULI.

"We Dare."

Kitty read the notice over twice as her uncle stood looking at it without speaking. Some time later she had cause to recall it. Long Jacobus stood, and when at

length he started slowly up the Broad Way he murmured audibly:

" Trouble will come, I fear me. Trouble will come."

His face was grave and stern as he spoke, and Kitty knew that he was thinking aloud rather than speaking to her, so she did not disturb him by chatter, but walked quietly home by his side. But the trouble that Jacobus feared did not come that day. Beyond the clamor and confusion there was no further demonstration at the Fort though the Lieutenant-Governor and the military stationed there made ready for it. The excitement continued unabated, however, seeming to increase as October gave way to chill November. The First Day of this month was the day set for the Stamp Act to go into effect.

It was a gray, chill day typical of the month and of the despair that filled the hearts of the colonists. It was ushered in by the discharge of guns which were fired upon the Commons by the citizens who had planned a great demonstration to show plainly to the Lieutenant-Governor their detestation of the Act. Kitty rose early, dressed hastily when she heard the guns, then ran downstairs to find out what was going on, for the turbulence of the past few days had been such that one scarcely knew what to expect.

" Grandmother," she cried as she came upon that lady in the dining-room, " is it that the soldiers of the Fort have fired upon the people that I hear the guns? "

Now that such was the intention of the Lieutenant-Governor and General Gage, Commander-in-chief of the British troops, should the citizens indulge in any untoward action had been rumored upon the streets, and Kitty had heard the report.

"No, Kitty. The guns are fired by the people themselves in the Fields. There is to be a great demonstration throughout the day, I hear, so that the opposition to the stamp tax may be clearly shown. Listen to the bells!"

Kitty went to an open window where her grandmother had been standing, and leaned out. All the bells in the city had been muffled, and were tolling dolefully. There was great tumult in the streets, too,—the clatter of horses; the clamor of men and boys, for the Broad Way was filled with people, all of whom seemed going toward the Fort where the greatest protest was to take place, the shouts and cries, made an indelible impression upon the mind of the child so that she never forgot it.

Everywhere the wildest excitement prevailed. Numbers of people had flocked into town from Nassau Island, from the Jerseys, and from the mainland of the province. They uttered terrifying threats. They sang ballads as they wandered through the streets, or shouted confusion to the enemies of Liberty. Pennants were hung at half-mast, and so universal was the feeling against the stamps that even little children caught the

spirit of their elders, and paraded the streets, caroling merrily:

"Liberty, property, and no stamps!"

Kitty turned from the window with a disturbed expression. "Will there be trouble at the Fort, Grandmother?"

"'Tis feared, Kitty. The people are enraged, and should the Lieutenant-Governor attempt to distribute the stamps no one knows what may happen. Jacobus says that many are fearful of bloodshed. I pray that the Governor may heed this protest."

"Can naught be done, Grandmother? Could not Uncle Jacobus do something?"

In spite of the gravity of the situation Madame Gerritt's lips relaxed into a smile. Kitty's belief in Jacobus's power to alleviate any condition was well known.

"All things have been done that can be, child," she told her. "The Congress hath drawn up a dignified statement of our grievances that hath been sent to the King and his Councilors; Mayor Cruger and some of the leading citizens have warned Governor Colden that the stamped papers must not be distributed else civil war will result; and last night two hundred of our merchants signed a non-importation agreement of which great things are hoped. Jacobus was among them. Oh, England will find that New York shall do as well as her neighbors!"

"So Uncle Jacobus said. Grandmother, what doth non-importation mean?"

"It means, little one, that the merchants will send for no more goods from England, and that none of them, or their families, will wear aught that is not manufactured in the provinces until the Stamp Act is repealed. In other words, no more must thy pretty frocks, or silken shoon be worn while England tries to make the colonies use stamped paper. Shall you like that?"

Kitty glanced down thoughtfully at her little high-heeled shoes of brocade. She dearly loved pretty shoes.

"Shall I have to wear shoon made of ox-hide as the slaves do, Grandmother?"

"It may come to that, Kitty." The lady watched the changing expressions of the little girl with amused eyes. Presently Kitty spoke gleefully, using the words that she had heard on the Battery the day that the stamp ship had come into port:

"I'd wear sheepskin with the wool on if it would help the colonies against England, Grandmother."

Madame Gerritt laughed outright.

"To Jacobus shall I tell that, little one. 'Tis the way we all feel. Cornelia already hath sent to the bouwerie for the spinning-wheels and the looms, and we are to begin the manufacture of cloth for the household needs very soon. Jacobus wishes it, and so of course do we."

"But if the merchants don't buy goods, England won't like it, Grandmother," remarked Kitty sagely.

"No, she won't like it, Kitty, and that is just the point. She will lose more from it in a year than the stamp tax could ever recompense. Whatever touches the revenue of a country will bring men to see reason as naught else can do. Jacobus said that a copy of the Agreement had been sent to the merchants of Boston and Philadelphia, and that 'twas hoped that they would adopt similar resolutions. Should they do so it will do more to bring about the repeal of the tax than anything else."

Kitty sat still a long time without saying anything, seemingly pondering what she had heard. After a time she said in a low tone:

"Grandmother, had I not interfered when the British seamen were trying to take that old sailor Dirck would be with us now. Did I do right?"

Madame Gerritt sat up quickly, evidently taken aback by the little girl's words. She did not reply at once, and when at length she spoke it was with trembling accents:

"We must always do what we believe to be right, my child, regardless of what may happen to us. It would have been as unjust for the King's men to have taken the sailor as it was for them to take Dirck. Never regret anything done in kindness, or to right a wrong even though grief may come because of the action. Were it

all to do over again none of us would have you to do other than you did. If Dirck were here I doubt not but that he would say the same. My little son!"

Her voice broke, and she rose hurriedly to leave the room. Kitty ran after her and caught her about the waist.

"A kiss first, thou dear Grandmother. I have made thee sad, and naught of sorrow would I cause thee."

"Nay, little one. Never naught but gladness hast thou given me." The lady embraced her tenderly. "But see now! so much have we talked, and thou hast not breakfasted. A truce there must be to everything until thou hast eaten. I will eat with thee. Cornelia ate with Jacobus who was up at daylight."

But there was too much going on in the street for Kitty to stay long at table. Her wonted duties were sadly neglected in the effort to watch proceedings. All day the demonstration continued. So threatening at length grew the people that the Lieutenant-Governor became alarmed, and consented to let the mayor of the city take the stamps in charge to remain in his custody until the coming of the new Governor, Sir Henry Moore. And when this was done quiet was restored to the city.

CHAPTER XII

THE OLD SAILOR AGAIN

"HOLD your hands out before you, Araminta, so that I can put a skein upon them to wind ready for knitting. Yes, you may sit while doing it. Aunt Cornelia says that for one day enough we have done. She is pleased with our progress in spinning, and it may be that we shall be allowed to spin the wool for all the stockings. Will not that be fine?"

Kitty arose from a low chair in which she sat before a spinning-wheel, and, taking a snowy skein of yarn from a reel upon the table, dexterously adjusted it upon the hands of Araminta who sat with arms extended awkwardly before her. The little negress rolled up her eyes until only the whites showed at her small mistress's words, and groaned lugubriously:

"'Deed then, Miss Kitty, I doesn't mind dis heah

windin' de yahn, but dere ain't nothin' so fine erbout spinning all de wool fer de stockings dat I kin see. Yer uncle's foot am as big as mammy's, and hit 'ud take a heap ob yahn fer dere stockings. Yes'm. Hit would suah."

Kitty laughed.

"Well then, we won't think whose stockings the yarn is for, 'Minta. We'll just see how many skeins we can spin a day. We will have to knit too, so that Aunt Cornelia can look after the weaving. Everything in the house must be of our own making until the Stamp Act is repealed, Uncle Jacobus says, so that every one of us must be busy in order to get it done. So much as there is to do. Now hold your hands out a little straighter. There, that was better. A good girl you are, Araminta."

It was a pretty picture. The little girl stood in a graceful attitude before her small servitor who held the white skein of yarn gingerly on her dusky hands, both of them so intent upon their task as to be oblivious to the smiling glances cast in their direction by Johanna and Wyntje, Araminta's mother. It was late afternoon, and the shadows of early twilight were already beginning to darken the corners of the kitchen, affording a pleasing contrast to the cheerful glow of the firelight. Outside a chill rain was falling; a rain that bade fair to become sleet ere the night fell. But so cheery was the room that the discomfort of the weather but

added to its attractiveness. As Araminta, pleased by Kitty's words of praise, straightened her small arms and sat stiffly erect the door opened to admit Cornelia. She glanced at her niece with a troubled expression.

"Kitten," she said, "someone hath come to see you. 'Tis the old sailor whom you helped when the King's men sought to take him. Mother says to tell you that come in you need not if 'twould distress you."

"Distress me? Why, I'd like to see him," exclaimed Kitty. Before her talk with her grandmother on Stamp Act Day she had felt that she could not bear to look upon him again. Since then she wished to see him. "What can he want, I wonder? Araminta, you may ——"

"Now, Miss Kitty," interrupted the little handmaiden with an insinuating smile, "I knows yer doesn't want me er messin' dis heah yahn while you is away; now does yer?"

Kitty laughed.

"Well then, the yarn can wait until I come back. That will end our stint of work for the day, and you shall play if it pleases you. Take the yarn, Johanna, so that it will not snarl. A good, good girl you are, 'Minta." Kitty patted the little darkey indulgently upon the back with her most grown-up manner, too fond of play herself not to be in full sympathy with the latter's desire to idle, then quickly left the kitchen.

In the living-room she found her grandmother and

the old sailor who, cap in hand, stood talking earnestly to the lady. His face lighted up at sight of the little girl, and he broke off what he was saying to ejaculate abruptly:

" The Lord love us, if it ain't Capting Kitty herself! I was just telling your grandmother, Skipper, as how I didn't know about your brother being took by the King's men until this very morning. You see the *Charming Sally* started on the return trip to Boston the very next day after the British seamen tried to impress me, and I ain't been in New York since until we made the port yesterday. 'Twas by a bare chanct that I heard about the lad from another sailorman. If I had knowed it afore I'd 'a' been here long ago to tell you how sorry I am that I brought this trouble upon you. Such a likely lad too! Old Ben would rather have been took ten times over than to have had it happen. Why bless ye, 'twould have been naught for an old salt like me to go, used to the sea as I am; but he were but a soft youngster. You don't know how bad I feel about it, little skipper."

" Grandmother said that 'twould have been as unjust for the King's men to have taken you as it was for them to take my brother," Kitty told him sweetly, going to him with extended hand. " We don't feel that you are to blame, Ben. Grandmother said, too, that if it were to do over again all of us would try to keep the King's men from taking you just as we did. She believes that Dirck would feel the same about it if he were with us."

"Now that's kind of you, miss and ma'am." Old Ben's eyes glistened, and he took Kitty's tiny hand into his brawny one with awkward gentleness. "That's mighty kind, I take it. Not many 'ud look at it that way, and I'll never forget it. But to tell ye that I'm sorry for it all is only part of the reason that I'm here. I come because I think I bring news of your brother."

"News of Dirck?" screamed Kitty, starting forward excitedly while Madame Gerritt, stirred out of her usual repose, rose from her chair eagerly. "Oh, Ben, what is it? Do tell me. Is he well? Have you seen him? Oh, tell me, tell me quick!"

"Now, now, miss, wait a minute," spoke Ben. "No; I haven't seen him, but he's well, I guess, from what I've heard; though mind, Capting, it might not be your brother arter everything is said and done. If you'll just let me tell you about it." He paused, glancing beseechingly at Madame Gerritt.

"Be seated, Ben," spoke the lady kindly. "Yes; you shall tell us about it in your own way. Kitty, come to me."

Trembling from head to foot with eager anxiety to hear what the sailor might have to say Kitty went to her grandmother, and leaned against her shoulder from which vantage point she gazed at the man with pitiful intentness.

"Arter we had finished unloading the cargo of the *Charming Sally* this morning," began Ben with exas-

perating deliberateness, seating himself gingerly upon the edge of a chair, " I got shore leave and went at onct to Kierstede's tavern and sat me down with my pipe for a quiet hour of rest. And as I sot there I got to thinking as to how it were the very last time I were in New York that the King's men had tried to get me, and I wondered if a man-o'-war were in the Bay now. Pretty soon in comes a seafaring man dressed like a British seaman, but I knew by the cut of his jib that he were an American. He looks about careful like, and then comes over to my bench.

" ' Mate,' says he as he sot down, ' how do you hang on this here stamp question? With the people, or with the King? '

" ' With the people,' I told him quick like. I could see that something was back of the question. ' It's liberty and no stamps for me every time. And you too, I guess, even though you be decked out in that rigging.'

" ' Right-o,' he comes right back at me. ' And I don't wear this rigging because I want to, but because I was impressed into His Majesty's sarvice, and I have to.'

" ' I mistrusted as much, matey,' I tells him. ' They come near getting me last time I was in New York. 'Twas the *Dolphin's* men.'

" ' I'm on the *Asia,*' he says. ' Well, if the *Dolphin* didn't get you it got some others, and it's about one of them that I want to talk. 'Twas this way,' he says:

'We passed the *Dolphin* on our way here and lay alongside of her for an hour while the two skippers visited. My skipper having gone over to give the *Dolphin's* captain the news. We men who rowed the gig went into the fo'c'sle with the *Dolphin's* men. There was a young fellow there sitting sort of doleful like on his bunk, and seeing that he was from the colonies, and just a lad too young to be aboard ship, I sung out:

"'"Where you from, mate?"

"'"New York," he tells me. "I was impressed just before the *Dolphin* left harbor."

"'"Soho!" I says. "Couldn't they find anybody of the right age in New York that they had to take a baby?" He grinned at that, and says:

"'"Oh, I guess they find me handy. I'll be all right as soon as I get my sea legs. What's worrying me is my folks. They'll grieve over my taking."

"'"Why don't you send them some word?" I asks. "From the looks and speech of you, you must be one of them fellows with book larning enough to write a letter. We're bound for New York, and I'll take a letter if you want me to."

"'"You will?" he cries, and up and hugs me he is that glad. "I already have a letter partly written, though I didn't know how I was to get it to them. I've writ a little every day, and I'll finish it now."

"'"Don't be long," I cautions. "I don't know how long the skippers will visit, and I'll have to go on or-

ders. And mind! don't let your messmates see you give it to me."

"'"I'll be careful," he says. Just before I goes on deck he slips me the letter and a half joe, and tells me to give the letter to his uncle and he will do as well by me. Now, matey, I'm blessed if I can remember what his or his uncle's name is though he told it to me. I do remember that he said something about a store and its sign.'

"'All the stores have signs, mate,' I tells him. 'But the one I think the most of is The Sign of the Golden Key because 'twas at that store that I made my escape from the King's men.'

"'Say that agin,' he cries out sudden like. 'Why, shiver my timbers, if I don't think that that's the very one the boy mentioned. What might be the name of the man who runs it?'

"'Gerritt,' I says, beginning to get excited myself. 'Was the lad's name Dirck Gerritt?'

"'Right-o, mate. Why, this is luck right off the reel! Say,—why, what's the matter?'

"'Matter enough,' I says. 'If that boy was taken it was because he helped his uncle and his sister to keep me from the *Dolphin's* men. Wait here until I ask the landlord. Maybe he knows something about it.' With that I sails up to the tavern keeper, and asks him if he knows anything about the impressment of a boy just before the *Dolphin* sailed. 'Why, everybody

knows about it,' he says. 'Where have you been that you don't know that they took Dirck Gerritt and two men. The town was wild over the boy's impressment.' And then he ups and tells me all about it.

"The sailor and me goes up to The Sign of the Golden Key to see Mr. Gerritt, but he wasn't there. We waited a long time for him, and still he didn't come, so I suggested that we bring the letter here. But he was shy, so I come myself. And here is the letter."

With a cry of joy Kitty darted forward, and seized the folded paper that he extended.

"News from Dirck, from my brother, Grandmother," she exclaimed sobbingly. "News from Dirck at last!"

"Be not too sure, little one," cautioned her grandmother as she rose from her chair, and reached out a shaking hand for the missive. "Ah!" she ejaculated as she broke the seal and gave a hasty glance at the contents. "Ah, Kitty! 'Tis indeed from Dirck. Oh, thank Heaven! Thank Heaven! 'Tis indeed from Dirck himself. Call them all in, my child. Let the whole family know that there is news from Dirck. My little son!"

Laughing, crying, hardly able to speak for emotion Kitty ran hastily from room to room to gather the family, and soon the excited household was assembled. With voice that trembled the grandmother read the letter:

"My honored uncle:" began the epistle in the formal phraseology of the times.

"Of course Kitty hath told thee about how I was taken by the King's men in the garden of the King's Arms Tavern, and at first I blamed myself for taking her to that part of the garden to see the fireworks, believing that 'twould not have happened had we gone somewhere else. But, Uncle Jacobus, it would have occurred sooner or later anyway; for they were watching to get me all the time.

"It seems they frightened us about Kitty purposely to make it easier to get me. Well then, I'm glad that it was not Kitty. And yes, I must tell you right here that the sailor fired the shot at her the day we were at the Collect purely to scare her. He did not intend to hurt her, but I'd as soon be hurt as scared any day. He told all about it one day in the fo'c'sle, and laughed at how she ran. Well, I pitched into him right then and there, and we had as pretty a little frisk as you ever saw. My uncle, ashamed of me you would not have been for I gave so good an account of myself that the other men called me a 'plucky little lubber,' and told the sailor that he was a Put to laugh at a girl.

"But to begin at the beginning: when the sailors took me that night they rowed round to the Sound River where the *Dolphin* lay in its upper reaches, for it was not in the lower bay at all as one of them said. I was furious at being taken, and felt as though I would like to fight the whole British navy. Night, however, brought reflection, and I remembered that Master Nicholas Welp had often advised us in school always to make the best of a bad situation. Also, my uncle, I have heard you say ofttimes that what can't be cured

must be endured, and so I resolved that I would make the best of whatever was before me. I am glad that such was my determination, for rebellion is met with kicks and blows, and submission gives fair treatment.

" The skipper didn't show up that night, but the next morning when I came on deck he roared at the sight of me:

" ' What the mischief is this Dutch infant doing here? Didn't I say that I wanted men? '

" That roused me, and I said:

" ' Well, sir, I didn't want to come any more than you want me here. But so long as I am here why not make the best of a bad business? You will find me as willing to learn as a man could be.'

" At that he cooled down a bit, and said that I was a lad of parts, but to keep a civil tongue in my head. Then he put me in charge of the First Mate, and told him to see what he could do with me.

" I have always wanted to go to sea, as you know, my uncle, but of course I intended to wait until I was older. Now that I am forced into it I am going to learn all that I can, and if ever there comes a time when the colonies are embroiled with England I shall be ready to do my share of fighting. And, my uncle, that time is coming.

" The talk on board is all about the Provinces, and their rebellion against the Stamps. Most of the crew are for bombarding the seaports to teach us a lesson in submission, and to force the colonists to adopt the stamps whether we will or no. My uncle, they call us Americans, and since being aboard ship I no longer feel that I am a Dutchman but that I am an American. So strange it is that when I think of Fatherland it is

America that comes before me and not Holland as we have always talked it. And yet I was born in New York, and thou too, my uncle, and Grandmother too, though she always speaks the Dutch, so 'tis not so strange after all. So many things come to me in the long watches of the night. Thoughts that I never had before; I don't believe that I ever realized how good and kind you all were until I came here. I think of you all often, especially when the stars come out so big and bright, and seeming so close that one has but to reach out to touch them, and the great sea running all around.

"I am learning to hand, to reef, and to steer. I scrub decks and brasses, and sometimes strike the bell so that it doth not sound like tolling. Best of all, the skipper says, I am learning that I know nothing. He sometimes lets me study navigation with him which I like.

"Now then you are not to worry about me. I am well, and getting so strong that you would scarcely know me. Tell Kitty not to grieve because I am coming home just as soon as it can be managed. I think often of you all. The dear Grandmother, the kind Aunt Cornelia, the good Uncle, and my own little sister. Tell Cuff, my boy, that a good account of him I shall expect to hear from thee. To all the servants love and good wishes. I have the honor to be, dear and revered Uncle,

"Your most obedient nephew,

"DIRCK GERRITT."

"*The Dolphin.*"

"The dear lad!" exclaimed the grandmother, wiping her eyes. "His best is he doing."

"My brother! My brother!" was all that Kitty could say.

In the midst of their rejoicing came Jacobus. Over again must old Ben tell the story after the uncle had read the letter.

"Like his father he was," he said at length, folding up the epistle after rereading it several times. "Good sense he showed that he set himself to learn all that he could. Some there are who would have spent the time bewailing their lot. Dirck is a lad to be proud of. His own ship shall he have when he comes back. Here, little one! Thou shall keep the letter for thine own. Now mind! there must be no more tears. If Dirck can bear his lot we must be equally brave. We must make him as proud of us as we are of him."

Kitty took the missive and kissed it.

"I shall be as brave as he," she declared. "My noble brother!"

Greatly relieved by the letter as to the boy's well-being the air of the house gradually assumed a more joyous tone, but nowhere was the change more marked than in Kitty. The child became once more merry and gay, and joined again in the games and pastimes of the Company like her old bright self.

CHAPTER XIII

UNEXPECTEDLY KITTY RENEWS A CHANCE ACQUAINTANCE

"Saint Nicholas, good, holy man,
Put the best tabard on you can,
And in it go to Amsterdam;
From Amsterdam to Hispanje,
Where apples bright of Oranje,
And likewise these pomegranates named,
Roll through the streets still unreclaimed.
Saint Nicholas, my dear, good friend,
To serve you ever is my end;
If you me now something will give,
Serve you I will as long as I live."

JOYOUSLY Kitty trilled the quaint little song as she moved to and fro in the kitchen, helping Cornelia in the preparation of innumerable delicacies. For it was the

fifth of December and the eve of the Festival of Saint Nicholas, or San Claas, as the children called him. Though a century had elapsed since the beginning of the English rule, and English customs were all but dominant in the little city, the Dutch residents still kept the Festival of Saint Nicholas, and still held him as the patron saint of New York even as they had revered him in the days when the city was the Dutch Colony of New Amsterdam. So all through the house was the bustle and stir of preparation. Dutch houses were always clean, but at the Festival of the patron saint they were superlatively so. Not an atom of dust or rust was allowed to remain in crack or crevice, while great heaps of toothsome dainties were baked in the kitchen.

Kitty polished a silver tankard, washed her hands, then stepped to the table where a large bowl of oly koecks, rich, sweet, and brown as chestnuts, stood temptingly.

"May I have another one, Aunt Cornelia?" she asked, holding up a fragrant cake suggestively. "So good as they are! No one else makes them as you do."

"So that you make not yourself sick you may eat all you wish, Kitten," replied her aunt indulgently. "But mind! San Claas must not find you ailing."

"He shall not," promised Kitty, biting into the crisp doughnut daintily. "Is there aught else that I can do to help you, Aunt Cornelia?"

"One thing; yes, two, my child. Finish first your

cake, then go to the garret and bring to me a string of sausages. Johanna forgot them when she brought the ham. The candles then must be taken from the molds, and the sconces filled. So nice these candles are! The bayberries made the most fragrant wax of any that we have had. Jacobus is fond of the odor."

Kitty had reached the door on her way to the garret, but paused on the threshold.

"Aunt Cornelia," she said, "do you think Dirck will be as happy on Saint Nicholas Day as we are?"

"Well then, I do. Is not the good saint the friend of sailors? Be sure that Dirck will be happy. I make no doubt but that a fine time will be had by all the sailors on his ship to-morrow. See now! the sausages bring, and then leave the candles to Johanna. For I have a secret to tell you. After which there will be just time for you to dress. Hast forgot that Mother said that you might go coasting on the Verlettenberg with your Company?"

"No; I had not forgot. But a secret, Aunt Cornelia? Oh, what can it be? Something about me, I am sure."

Cornelia's eyes twinkled.

"Be not too curious, lambkin. Hast never heard that curiosity killed a cat? Bring first the sausages, and then you shall hear what it is. Select a string that is well plumped, and in which the odor of sage is discernible."

With flying feet the little girl left the room, and ran

through the hall and up the flights of stairs that led to the attic. It was a big garret, extending over the whole of the house, with square windows at each end and dormers along the sides of the roof, which sloped from the peak to the floor. In this great garret flax-hatcheling, wool carding and weaving went on almost without cessation. Homespun had become fashionable, and it had become a sort of disgrace to wear silk, or satin, or broadcloth during the political anxiety that beset the country. So Cornelia had brought the looms from the bouwerie and set them up in the garret, determined that her family should wear naught but articles of home manufacture.

Above the looms hung rows of smoked hams from the huge beams, and long ropes of sausage-links, strings of dried apples and peppers, and all other stores which could endure the winter frosts. Those that could not were packed away in the dim recesses of the deep cellars.

Kitty selected a string of sausages very carefully, then went swiftly back to the kitchen eager to hear the secret. It seemed to her that Cornelia took a long time to decide whether or not the sausage was just what she wanted, but at length the good woman laid it on the table with an approving nod of the head.

"Well have you chosen, Kitten," she said smilingly. "Some day a good housevrouw shall you make. For reward now you shall hear the secret. Didst notice that

Mother and I were talking very earnestly last night in the living-room?"

"Yes; methought then that 'twas something that concerned me," spoke Kitty complacently.

"You did?" Cornelia laughed. "Well, of a truth it did concern you, though it was not intended that you should know about the matter until later. However, I make no doubt but that Mother will approve the telling of it now. Know then, that on the afternoon of the Nieu Jar you are to have all of your Company, and such other little friends as you wish for a party."

"A party?" Kitty clapped her hands in glee. "A real party, Aunt Cornelia? Why, it hath been two years since Dirck and I had a party. Do you remember ——"

"Yes, I remember. Mother thought you would like it. Now a merry heart can you carry to the sliding, and you may tell your Company also, if you wish, so that they too may find happiness in looking forward to the Nieu Jar."

"May I ask Newty Timm to come, Aunt Cornelia?"

"If you like." Cornelia was smiling broadly now with pleasure. "Mother and I hoped that you would, Kitten. It is dull for the lad: all work and no play, and though he is not of your Company it would give him gladness."

"And me also, Aunt Cornelia. And he shall have a good time too. Oh, I am so happy!"

Cornelia smiled again. She and Madame Gerritt deemed it best to keep the little maid occupied with either tasks or merry-makings until she became accustomed to her brother's absence. The child seemed to miss Dirck so that they hoped in this manner to woo her to forgetfulness. So Cornelia smiled to see her so happy, but she did not express her thought, merely saying:

"Go now and dress for the sliding, little one. Put on your thickest yarn stockings, and be sure to wear the wadded hood. Have a good time, for not many more times can you go coasting. Too great a girl are you getting to be."

Kitty laughed as she bounded away. She was soon dressed and set forth gaily. The day was clear and radiant but bitter cold in spite of the sunshine. Had she been a stranger instead of a native New Yorker she could have told where the Dutch families lived because in the windows of every such house shone the "Orange Boven" (Bow of Orange Ribbon), the Saint Nicholas color.

It was a merry company of boys and girls that Kitty found assembled on Verlettenberg, or Flatten Barrack as the English called it. This was the steep hill at the end of Garden Street,[1] and from the earliest days of the colony had been used by Dutch boys and girls for coasting. Rosy-cheeked little maidens and sturdy boys were

[1] Now Exchange Place.

they who minded not the snapping cold so that the sledding was fine. And fine it was indeed! The slope was smooth as glass, and the shouts and peals of laughter of the youngsters gave evidence of their appreciation of its condition. Presently, however, a cloud darkened the children's enjoyment.

As has been said, New York was at this time filled with soldiers, and the streets near the Fort were always thronged with them. Flatten Barrack, though generally regarded by the citizens as sacred to the use of the children during sliding time, was no exception to the rule. There seemed to be an unusual number of soldiers and officers abroad on this particular afternoon who, instead of keeping to the narrow footway, swarmed into the middle of the street seeming to delight in making the coasters turn out for them. It was a petty thing to do, but excitement ran high, and English officials in America never lost an opportunity of asserting their superiority, and displaying their power over the colonists from the Governor down to the lowest person who held a commission from the Government. So the soldiery went swaggering, and boasting, and openly insulting patriots in the streets while the spirit of resistance to tyranny grew. As the coasters were more and more frequently made to turn out for the soldiers the indignation of the children blazed, and they collected in groups to discuss the matter.

"We'll have to go somewhere else," spoke a girl mournfully. "They run us away from everything."

"We won't go away," declared a boy vigorously. "'Tis our hill. Why can't they take some other street to walk on? They know as well as we do that the best sliding in town is here. It hath always been given up to us."

"Well then, why should we let them run us away?" demanded Kitty with flashing eyes. "For my part, I shall not turn out again for anyone. Down I shall go, and if even an officer is in the way 'tis he that must turn out, or be run into by the sled. 'Twould be fine sport to make one of them jump."

"You'd be afraid to do it," said the boy who had spoken before. "I dare you to try it. Just as soon as one of them speaks you'll turn out as we all have done. See if you don't."

"You shall see," cried Kitty with sparkling eyes. "See now that young man just crossing the street? 'Tis an officer, I think. Well then, I shall make him jump to get out of the way. Watch me!"

"Kitty! Kitty!" exclaimed one of the girls. "Don't do it. You must not."

"Oh! she wouldn't dare," exclaimed the boy again.

"Just wait," cried Kitty. "You shall see." With this she noted carefully the position of the young fellow whom she had pointed out, adjusted her sled, then jumped nimbly on it, and went flying down the steep

incline standing erect, a feat that few of the boys dared emulate.

The young officer had reached the middle of the street when a sharp ejaculation from one of his fellows warned him of his danger. He glanced up to see Kitty's sled speeding toward him with tremendous velocity.

"Turn out, you little hoyden," he called excitedly. "Turn out!"

"Clear the track!" shouted Kitty gleefully. "Clear the track!"

Determination to go straight down the hill without turning out was expressed in every line of the erect little figure on the sled. Kitty had all the stubborn determination of a Dutch girl. It was plainly to be seen that if the young man were not to get run into by the sled he must get out of the way of the oncoming flyer. Discretion being the better part of valor in this case the officer jumped. Alas! he missed his footing and came down upon the smooth surface of the snow, kerplunck. Vainly he tried to regain his feet. Slipping, sliding, he resigned himself to the inevitable, and went careening down the hill in the wake of Kitty's flyer.

A howl of derisive laughter went up from the children on the hilltop who capered about in glee while even his brother officers could not but laugh at his discomfiture. Kitty had reached the bottom of the incline by this time. She had gone down so swiftly that she had passed the young officer as he jumped, but that he had come sliding

after her she did not know. So, as she turned rope in hand to ascend the hill, she was seized with consternation to find him scrambling to his feet directly in front of her.

"Why did you do that?" he demanded harshly, taking hold of the rope of the sled to detain her. "Don't you know that you might have hurt me seriously?"

But young America could be stirred by acts of injustice as well as its elders, so now the little girl mustered up her courage, and answered back:

"You made us turn out for you, and I wanted to make you jump. And you did. If it is that you are afraid of being run over why don't you use the other streets? 'Tis our hill."

"Soho, you young rebel! is it? Methought New York belonged to the Crown. It seems that I was mistaken. Zounds! what next? Now look up here! I'm going to tell you —— Why! it's the little girl whom I met at the King's Arms Tavern."

"You?" came from Kitty at the same moment. For it was the young lieutenant who had taken her to her grandmother the night that Dirck had been impressed by the King's men. "I knew not that it was you," she ended contritely. "I would not wish to make you jump."

"As well me as another. The intent was the same. Know you not that I could cause you trouble about this?"

"Yes; I know," admitted the small culprit calmly. "But you will not. So kind you are, and good. Uncle Jacobus hath often spoken of your goodness to us that night."

"Well, don't be too sure. I ought to do something, don't you know? You have no business to try to run into an officer of His Majesty's service. I ought, I say, but, odd's life! you're so little!"

"I shall grow," said the little maid demurely. "Well then, is it that I am to wait for the punishment?"

"See here," spoke the young man abruptly. "You're Dutch, are you not?"

"Yes, that is, I was. Dirck says that he no longer feels like a Dutchman but like an American. If my brother is an American why then, so am I."

"I see," answered he in the tone of one to whom the matter was indifferent. "Well, Dutch or American, it's all one, so that you will perform a small service for me. If you will I will overlook your trying to run over me. Know you Gretel Van Dorm?"

"Yes; she lives but two doors from us," answered Kitty. "But we call her Grietje."

"Yes; I believe that is the Dutch form. Well, see here! I want you to take this letter to her, and to tell no one about it. Will you?"

"So small a thing it is to do," laughed Kitty. "Yes; I can do that easily. And I know," she added rogu-

ishly, "what it is. 'Tis a token from Saint Nicholas."

"From Saint Nicholas?" he asked in a puzzled manner.

"Yes. To-morrow is his day, you know. 'Tis then that we find the gifts that the good saint leaves for us, though of course they are from our friends."

The lieutenant laughed.

"This token is not from a saint at all, but from a winged boy, my little girl. He is invisible like your Saint Nicholas, but armed with bow and arrow he exerts a powerful influence over us poor mortals into whom he shoots his darts. The English call him Cupid. I know not the Dutch name for him. But come! too long have we stood here, and you are blue with cold. Go quickly; 'twill not only warm you but speed my message to the fair Gretel as well."

Somewhat bewildered as to the meaning of what the young officer had been saying Kitty sped away, the letter which he had given her held tightly clasped in one hand.

CHAPTER XIV

IN A DILEMMA

THE letter was by no means the last that Kitty was called upon to deliver to the fair Gretel, but proved to be the first of many. Indeed it seemed to the little maid that she could not leave the house but that Lieutenant Pickering, for such was his name, would appear with an epistle for her to carry to Grietje Van Dorm. Kitty wondered not a little at the frequency of the missives, and one day spoke of it to the young officer with all the candor of a child.

"Such a foolishness," she said, regarding him with wide-eyed, innocent wonder, "such a foolishness as it is to write so much when 'twould be easier to tell things to Grietje. And the spelling! So many words as there must be to spell."

"Egad! 'tis what I would like to do, my little maid, but an ogre keeps my Gretel from having speech with me," explained the young man laughing. "Know then that I must write and spell all the words necessary to writing because her father will not let her talk to me. Red Coats are not in favor with your Dutch mynheers at present, so Gretel and I must write the things we fain would speak. Thanks to you, my small messenger, we can do this in spite of the ogre."

"Mynheer Van Dorm is not an ogre," reproved Kitty. "You should not speak so of Grietje's father. Uncle Jacobus calls him a worthy and esteemed citizen."

"Worthy and esteemed citizen he may be, but an ogre nevertheless in that he keeps Gretel from seeing me. But, if all goes well, we may talk soon instead of write. If all goes well, I say, and no one suspects what is going on. Have you told anyone about the letters?"

"No; I said that I would not, and I have not," Kitty made answer. "But at home they wonder at Grietje being with me so much. Only yesterday Grandmother said, 'Kitty, so strange it is that you and Grietje Van Dorm are friends when she is all of four years older than you. If she is not here you are up at her house. So strange it is!'"

"And what said you?" questioned the young officer quickly.

"I said, 'It is strange, Grandmother, but perchance

'tis because she hath no little sister.' I liked not to tell Grandmother that, but if Grietje had a little sister she would carry the letters, wouldn't she?" Kitty's eyes were troubled now, and she looked up at the young fellow anxiously. "Am I doing aught that is wrong, sir, in carrying those letters? I like not to do things that I may not tell my grandmother."

"No, no," he answered kindly. "That is, I believe not. From the beginning of time everything hath been fair in love, and so —— See here, little girl," he broke off boyishly, "I don't want you to do anything that you think wrong, but keep this to yourself a little longer; won't you? At the New Year you may tell your grandmother all about it. For then I hope that Gretel will make me the happiest of men."

"At the Nieu Jar?" cried she. "Why, that is but ten days from now. I have counted them, because I am to have a party on the afternoon of that day. This morning I said to myself when I got up, 'Only ten more days until my party.' Oh, everything good is to come on the Nieu Jar!"

"Well, some good things at any rate," he agreed. "And so your good is to be a party? And who are to come?"

"All of my Company," she told him. "Six boys and six girls. That is, there were six boys in the Company before Dirck was taken by the King's men. Now there are but five. But then, Newty Timm will be there, so

there will be six boys after all. Some of the girls do not want Newty to come because he is poor, and works in a butcher shop. But he was so good to find me when lost I was in those dreadful Lispenard Meadows. However I should have been found if he had not come I do not know."

"So in return you are going to give him an afternoon of pleasure," he smiled. "That is right and fair. Well, I hope that you will have a good time yourself. And now mind! not a word to anyone of this affair of mine until the New Year. Then I care not who knows of the matter."

"I will not speak of it to anyone," declared Kitty, going blithely on her way. It had troubled her more than a little that she could not tell the dear grandmother about Grietje and the young officer. Truthfulness was an inherent quality of the Dutch character, and anything savoring of deceit was abhorred. So Kitty went rejoicing on her way, for the New Year was not far off, and Grandmother could know everything then.

What the Festival of Saint Nicholas was to the children, New Year's Day was to the older people of New York. The custom of its observance was of Dutch origin, but the practice had become so general in the city that it was counted by all classes as the great day of the year. A gala occasion on which visits were made from early morn until late at night, and jollity reigned supreme. It was unusual for any part of the day to be

given over to children's entertainments, though they were permitted to be present in the rooms where their mothers received the callers. Consequently, Kitty and her friends were greatly elated over the fact that the party was to be on that day.

The days passed, and the year wore to its close. Christmas Day came and went. This day was not extensively observed as a holiday but kept by the Dutch in a religious manner. Eagerly Kitty kept count of the passage of the time, the short December days seeming long to her happy anticipation.

"Just two more days after to-day," she said to herself as she rose from her bed on the morning of the twenty-ninth of December. "Just two more days until the party. And what a frolic it will be! Oh, I do wish it were to-day!"

Joyously she ran down-stairs, minding not at all the bitter cold, and danced merrily into the kitchen where the family had gathered for breakfast. During the winter months Cornelia preferred the homely comfort of the kitchen to the stately coldness of the dining-room.

"Oh, I am so happy that the Nieu Jar will so soon be here," cried Kitty as she greeted each one with a tender caress. "Just two more days, Grandmother."

"And why be so happy over it, little one?" queried Mr. Gerritt. "There will not be the visiting and merry-making that usually goes on. In the state of the Province many of us deem it unwise to be gay when our

liberties are at stake. There will not be the visiting, as I say, but I have asked some of the merchants to come here for a civic session; not to make merry, but to discuss a matter of interest. I said naught of it, Cornelia, knowing that with the baking, and brewing, and mixing that was going on there would be enough of everything to provide for whatever of feasting we might desire."

"You did what, Jacobus?" exclaimed Cornelia, glancing at Kitty with surprise and consternation. She had been much pleased with the child's glad anticipation of her party.

"Asked a number of the merchants to meet here on Nieu Jar's Day," repeated Jacobus complacently. "A meeting was to be held at the Coffee House, but through some misunderstanding the landlord had rented the room to a Company of the Military for the same day. In fact, the long rooms of all the taverns have been engaged by the army for assemblies. There was naught else to be done but to ask them to meet with me. Our house can accommodate them."

"But is it large enough for Kitty's friends and yours too?" questioned his wife.

"What friends of Kitty's are to be here?" asked Jacobus in surprise.

"You told me, Jacobus, that there would be no visiting among the grown people on that day; so, fearing a lonesome time for Kitty with Dirck gone, I told her that she might give a party to her Company in the after-

noon. She hath invited them all, and Hermanus Timm also. And now what is to be done?"

"Dunder and Blitzen! why was I not told?" cried Mr. Gerritt. "A lot of the children to be here on that day? Why, it must not be! The matter we are to discuss is of great importance, and we must have no noise, nor confusion in the house. One of the merchants hath broken the agreement that we all entered into not to buy or sell goods for England on commission, and the case must be considered. Little one, thy frolic must go over. Another time thou shalt have it. I should have been told of it."

"I thought that you knew," said Cornelia. "Kitty hath done naught but talk of it ever since I told her that she might have the little folk here."

"Jacobus hath been too absorbed in politics to take heed of the home talk," explained his mother. "'Tis just a misunderstanding. Of course, there is naught to be done under the circumstances but for Kitty to tell her friends that they must come another day."

"Yes; that is what must be done," spoke Jacobus. "Sorry am I, little one, to interfere with thy enjoyment, but for this time it will have to be. Either thy friends or mine would have to be told not to come, and thou must see it should be thine."

"'Tis my fault," said Cornelia contritely. "I thought of naught but saving the little one from loneli-

ness that day, and should have been more careful. Now I have but caused her sorrow."

"'Tis all right, dear Aunt Cornelia," spoke Kitty, with difficulty keeping back her tears. "Uncle Jacobus could not tell the merchants not to come. He is right. The party must be put off until another time. I will tell the boys and the girls to-day. After all I mind it most about Newty Timm. I wished to make him happy."

"That's a brave little one," said Jacobus fondly. "I knew that you would see and do the right thing, Kitty. As for Hermanus Timm we shall have him with us for several days when we go to the bouwerie. I have arranged it with his mother. And the party shall be made up to you, lambkin. You shall have as pretty a little frisk as ever New York saw."

But in spite of the fact that Kitty was trying to bear her disappointment bravely, it was with great reluctance that she set forth to withdraw the invitation to her friends. There would be comments, some of them not good-natured, she knew. Children do not like to be disappointed in their pleasures any more than grown-ups, and are sometimes outspoken in saying what they think of matters. She dreaded Alida Drew most of all, because Alida always spoke her mind. It was the same Alida who had said that Kitty was tied to her grandmother's apron strings. This little girl lived in Broad Street, and was first on Kitty's list to visit. Slowly Kitty

turned from the Broad Way into Wall Street so deep in thought that she did not hear Lieutenant Pickering call to her, nor did she heed his approach until she felt a light touch on her shoulder.

"Why so absorbed, Kate?" he asked quizzically. "You did not hear me call, and I wish to give you the very last letter that I shall ask you to carry to Gretel. Faith! one would think that affairs of state rested upon your shoulders so long a face do you draw. What hath happened?"

"My name is not Kate," responded Kitty, mechanically taking the letter that he held out to her. "It is Catherine, but my friends call me Kitty which is short for Catherine."

"And so is Kate," he laughed. He seemed in high spirits. "Or Kathy, or Kit. But you should be merry, and not sad, for know, O thou small messenger of Cupid, that no more shalt thou be called upon to perform thy office. And in two days more, on New Year's Day, thou art free to tell any and everyone about the letters. For then Gretel Van Dorm shall be no more, and Lieutenant Pickering's wife can defy the world."

"Yes," replied the little girl uncomprehendingly.

"Hast the megrims?" he asked kindly, dropping the half-bantering manner that he always used in talking. He saw that the child was really distressed about something. "What is it, Kitty? Hath aught gone amiss about the party?"

"Yes, yes," nodded Kitty, the tears welling into her eyes. "It is not to be. Uncle Jacobus hath asked friends also, and both of us cannot have them at the same time. He knew not about my party, and I knew naught of his. So I must tell the boys and the girls not to come that day. 'Tis wrong in me to mind because Uncle Jacobus is always so good, but I can't help but feel bad about it. Such a fine time did I think to have."

"Of course you feel bad," exclaimed he, still young enough to sympathize with the child's disappointment. "It is hard to tell the youngsters not to come after you have asked them. Could naught be done anent it? Isn't there somewhere that you could have the party? Let me see! I have it. I shall not be home on that day, and you shall have your frolic at my quarters."

But Kitty shook her head.

"So kind you are to think of it," she said sweetly, "but Grandmother would not let me."

"Wouldn't she? That's too bad. I'd like you to have a good time on that day because, because —— Well, you have helped me about something that's going to make me happy then. Where are you going now? To Gretel's?"

"First, to Alida Drew's. I dread to tell her about the party the worst of any of the Company, so Grandmother told me to go there at once. 'Tis well,' she said, 'to get a dreaded thing over with, and the heart will be

lighter for the rest of the journey. If 'tis put off until the last 'twill hang over thee growing heavier all the while.' So I go now to Alida's."

"That is good philosophy," he commented. "Well, go on to Alida's, but don't let her see that letter. A little chatterer, if ever there was one, and 'twould be no time until the fact that I wrote a letter to Gretel Van Dorm would be noised all over town. Do you know that my quarters are with Mistress Drew?"

"Alida told me, sir."

"She did? See here, I believe that I'll go back with you. It may be that Mistress Drew could suggest something that might be done."

"Naught can be done," said Kitty, yet she glanced up at him eagerly as she spoke. Childlike she believed implicitly in the ability of grown-ups to accomplish wonders. Perchance after all some way might be thought of by which she could have the party. So, in better spirits than she had thought possible a short time before, she walked with the young officer to Mrs. Drew's in Broad Street.

"Alida is not here, Kitty," said Alida's mother in answer to the little girl's inquiry. "She hath gone to Mr. Kip's store to buy herself a fan to carry to your party. The lieutenant here told her that it was à la mode in London to carry one to a party, so naught of peace would she give me until I let her go to buy one. La, child! you have upset all the children with that party

of yours. Alida talks of nothing else. I shall be glad when it's over. Why! What's the matter? "

" It is not to be," Kitty told her, breaking suddenly into tears. " Uncle Jacobus hath asked some merchants for that day, so I can't have it. He knew naught of mine though we thought he did, and so, and so ——"

" There, there, child. 'Tis naught to make such a pother about. Of course you ought not to have your party if your uncle hath asked the merchants there for a meeting. Come now! sit down and tell me all about it."

" I offered the use of my quarters for the frolic as I shall not be here on that day," spoke Lieutenant Pickering when Kitty had finished the recital. " She seemed to think that her grandmother would not consent to let her accept. 'Tis too bad. I'd like to do Kitty a kindness for she hath been of great service in running errands for me on several occasions."

Mrs. Drew smiled. Perhaps she had a shrewd suspicion as to the nature of the errands the little girl had run for the officer. She was an Englishwoman, married to a Dutchman, and her sympathies were naturally with her countryman. Now she spoke quietly enough though her eyes were twinkling.

" Well, we all like to pay such debts, Lieutenant, and 'tis true indeed that one good turn deserves another. There is no reason in the world why Kitty shouldn't have that party here. So, if you will permit the use of

your rooms, perchance I can persuade her grandmother to give her consent to the arrangement. And glad enough I'll be to do it, too. I could never face Alida after she has bought that fan if there were no opportunity for her to use it. She would be as disappointed as you are, Kitty. Come! let's go to your grandmother."

"Nay; she hath first an errand to perform," interposed Lieutenant Pickering, smiling broadly. "Run along, Kate, Kitty, or Kit, and may Mercury lend wings to your feet. Much depends upon the safe delivery of that letter. Tell none of your friends of the postponement of the party until you hear from Mrs. Drew. We will discuss what to do about the frolic while you are on your way."

With light heart Kitty left them, but it was not until late in the afternoon that she learned the result of the consultation. Then her grandmother called her into the living-room where Cornelia sat knitting. Both ladies were smiling.

"Good news, Kitten," cried Cornelia eagerly as the little maid entered the room. "Good news indeed! You are to have your party after all."

"Oh! am I?" cried Kitty delightedly.

"Yes, little one," spoke her grandmother. "Here hath been Mistress Drew to-day, saying that Alida would be as much disappointed as you are not to have the party. That the children all seemed to set great store by it so that 'twas a pity it should be deferred. So

she hath offered the use of her house for it. For this time I have consented that it shall be, though I like not for you to go from home for such frolics. However, Johanna shall go with you, and the cakes and the cookies shall be taken from here. Thy little friends may meet here, and then march down to good Mistress Drew's."

"Oh, Grandmother!" cried Kitty, dancing about in glee. "How glad I am! How glad I am!"

"And we are glad too, little one, that all hath turned out so happily," said the lady. "Jacobus will be as delighted as we are. It grieved him that you must be so disappointed. But we must all try to avoid such misunderstandings in future."

"Yes, yes, Grandmother. We must indeed. So good is Uncle Jacobus that I like not to interfere with his arrangements. But now all is right again."

CHAPTER XV

AN INTERRUPTED PARTY

THE New Year's Day for which Kitty waited so impatiently dawned at last. The intense cold that prevailed during the closing days of the year had moderated, and a heavy snow had fallen, covering everything with a thick, soft blanket of white. A blanket so thick that houses and trees were dwarfed in height; so white that it seemed the quintessence of purity. It was as though Nature had thrown a mantle of spotlessness over every object that the New Year might make his advent upon a stainless earth.

To the colonists the incoming year of 1766 was fraught with momentous possibilities, for none knew what a day might bring forth. Public interests were in such condition that every social and domestic event was

tinged with the political anxiety and excitement that beset the citizens. An uneasiness that extended even to the children who reflected the opinions of their elders. So it was that when Kitty's Company began to assemble in the early afternoon there was much merriment when it was discovered that each arriving guest was attired in homespun. It was counted a kind of disgrace to be garbed otherwise since the merchants had passed their agreement.

"Such a funny thing as it is," laughed Kitty, whose gown was of blue and brown checkered wool of Cornelia's weaving. "Why, it might be called a linsey-woolsey party."

"It shows that we are all against the Stamp Act anyway," remarked one of the boys.

"All but Alida, and a fine fan she hath that does not accord with her homespun frock," cried a girl. "A fan of home manufacture you should have, Alida."

"And so it is," answered Alida, holding up the fan for inspection. "'Twas made by the Nassau Island Indians, and if that isn't home manufacture I don't know what is. They were here before we were. I wanted a fan of gauze; yellow gauze with sticks of sandalwood for a handle. One that folded. But Mr. Kip said that the gauze fans that he had he had put away because they were from London. Them he would not sell. No; nor aught else that came from England. So I had to take this fan which doth not fold."

"'Tis pretty even though it doth not fold," said Kitty, eyeing the fan approvingly.

It was round, covered with feathers dyed brilliantly in reds and blues, in the midst of which was poised a stuffed bird of vivid yellow. To the children accustomed to seeing articles of Indian manufacture it was no novelty, and secretly not a few of the little maids sympathized with Alida in her desire for a fan of gauze.

"Why do we wait, Kitty?" asked Alida after the inspection of her fan was over. "Aren't we all here?"

"All but Newty Timm," Kitty made answer.

"Oh, let's go on without him," said Alida, waving her fan in grown-up fashion. "We don't want him with us anyway."

"Well then, I do," began Kitty indignantly. Just at this juncture the brass knocker sounded, and a moment later Old Peter, Johanna's husband, who was attending the door, announced sonorously:

"Mistah Hermanus Timm, jungvrowe."[1]

Instantly the children ceased their clatter and turned their glances upon the lad who had followed close upon the darkey's heels, and now stood on the threshold of the drawing-room dangling a cap of rabbit's skin in his hand. As were the others, he was clad in homespun, but such service had his clothes seen that they were worn

[1] Miss, young lady. Pronounced youngfrow. The darkies of Dutch families spoke a mixture of Dutch and English.

and threadbare. For a moment Kitty stood without speaking. She had not seen him since the night he had found her lost in the terrible Meadows, and upon that occasion, naturally, she had given no thought to his garments. True she had known that the family was poor, but she had not realized how poor, even though both Cornelia and her grandmother had spoken of it. Now the boy's thinly clad figure presented such a striking contrast to the warmly dressed children before her; he was so different, so shabby, and the children stared at him so that for a brief moment Kitty was half sorry that she had asked him to come. For a moment only; and then, as she caught his glance the boy's manly face relaxed into a bright smile, and he spoke:

"To your party I have come," announced Newty Timm; she ran to him with outstretched hands.

"So glad am I to see you, Newty. Come right in. Peter will take your cap. These are the boys and girls of my Company, Newty. This is Hermanus Timm, everybody, though he is called Newty. Such a funny thing hath happened, Newty; we are not to have the party here after all, but at Alida's, because Uncle Jacobus had invited friends also. He knew not of my party, and I knew not of his. So we go from here to Alida's. We waited for you."

"Sorry am I to have kept you waiting, Kitty, but the snow was deep, and to walk here took a long time," the boy told her, acknowledging the introduction to the

Company pleasantly. He seemed not at all concerned about his apparel, and watching him, Madame Gerritt and Cornelia, who sat at one end of the room quite away from the young folk, nodded to each other approvingly.

" 'Tis a party in three parts," said Alida at this juncture, speaking affectedly. " We meet at Kitty's, go to my house, and play in Lieutenant Pickering's quarters. La, such fun! Why do you look so at me, Hermanus Timm?"

" 'Tis the fan," said Newty Timm, crossing to her side and deliberately taking the article from her. " Handle it right you do not. Lady Moore, the new Governor's wife, moves her fan like this." Slowly, with the languid manner of a woman of fashion, he swayed the fan gently to and fro. The children laughed, but Alida's lip curled.

" How do you know, malapert?" she demanded. " Such as you don't go to see the Governor's lady."

" No? Well then, maybe she comes to see us. Yes, that was so." He nodded his head several times in answer to their surprised glances. " She came to get my mother to make for her some Flemish lace. So beautifully does my mother make it that Lady Moore wishes it very much. I saw her use her fan then."

" Show me just how she did it, Newty," urged Alida affably, drawing close to him while the other children gathered about the two, laughing merrily at Alida's attempts to copy the boy's movements. Kitty was smil-

ing too, well pleased that the awkwardness of the lad's entrance had worn away. Cornelia and her mother-in-law again exchanged approving glances.

" Have no fear that Hermanus will not enjoy himself, Kitty," whispered Cornelia as the children made ready for their departure. " See how he hath made himself one of the Company. The children will like him as well as you do before the afternoon hath gone. Bring him back with you, Kitty, for supper. Cuff shall take him home in the sleigh. I like the lad."

Cornelia proved a true prophet. The march to Mistress Drew's was a merry one, for Newty Timm, entering into the spirit of the affair with all the zest of one unaccustomed to pleasure, saw fun in everything and kept the children shouting with laughter all the way.

" He is real nice after all," whispered Alida to Kitty as they reached Mrs. Drew's. "And, Kitty, do you know I was hoping that he wouldn't come? I came near having a club, a pair of old shoes, a stick and a half joe ready to give him when he came here."

" Oh, Alida," cried Kitty, shocked. For this would have been an emblematic message to signify the desire entertained for the boy's departure. The stick was to push him away, the shoes to wear on the road, and the bread and money a provision for his journey. These symbols at the time being well understood. " You would not do such a thing surely. 'Twould be unkind."

" Oh, Mother wouldn't let me," said Alida, giggling.

"And glad am I now that I did not. Newty is real nice."

"I wish ——" began Kitty when Mistress Drew joined them, drawing Kitty to one side.

"You are to play all over the house, Kitty," she said. "Any games you wish. The supper, though, is to be in Lieutenant Pickering's quarters. He would have it so, and glad indeed was I to agree, for my dining-room is much too small. And he had his man to make some syllabub for the children which he leaves with his compliments to you. A great fancy hath he taken to you, my dear. More than he hath to Alida, and yet she hath been good to fetch and carry for him since he hath been with us."

"I think he likes Alida as well as he does me," laughed Kitty. "'Tis only that I carried some letters for him to Grietje Van Dorm that he is so good to me."

"I suspected as much," commented the lady, smiling. "But perchance he doth not wish it told, Kitty."

"It doth not matter now. 'Tis the Nieu Jar, and he cares not who knows it. But there! to Grandmother I forgot to tell it, and to her first of all do I wish to tell about it." And with this Kitty would say no more on the subject.

"Well, when the time for the supper comes you are to start the game Follow the Leader, and bring the children into his rooms," Mrs. Drew told her.

A merry time followed. All through the rooms of the house went the happy children, playing Hide and Go Seek, I Spy, and other games. The Dutch clock in the hall pointed to four o'clock when Kitty started Follow the Leader in answer to Mistress Drew's signal. Up into the musty, sloping roofed garret the whole gleeful troop raced after her; from attic to cellar, up-stairs again to the chambers, over and under the huge four-post bedsteads, and finally, flushed and breathless, sliding down the broad banisters of the staircase at the foot of which was the door leading to the officer's quarters.

The quarters had originally been the parlor of the house but had been divided by curtains into apartments, sitting-room and sleeping-chamber. The curtains were drawn back now, and a long table set, around which the children gathered for soft waffles and chocolate to be followed by the cakes for which the Dutch were famous: "Oly Koecks," crullers and Nieu Jar cookies.

But scarcely had Johanna begun to serve the hungry little ones when the knocker sounded harshly on the front door. So imperative was the summons that Mrs. Drew, startled, put down the chocolate pot, and started hurriedly for the hall, exclaiming:

"Why! who in the world can that be?"

Before she could leave the room, however, there came a commotion from the hall, and the door of the parlor was thrown wide to admit three men who pushed rudely into the apartment.

"Is Lieutenant Pickering here?" demanded one, stepping forward. "And which are his quarters?"

"Lieutenant Pickering is not at home, sir," answered Mrs. Drew quietly. "These are his quarters. He gave permission for these children to have a party here."

"They must leave at once," said the spokesman. "We are a committee of citizens, authorized to make a search of these quarters. The children will hinder us."

"Search these rooms?" exclaimed the lady, aghast. "Why! the lieutenant is not here. I cannot permit it in his absence."

"You will have to do so, madam. We have reason to believe that the young man hath some stamped paper among his effects. Not one piece of that paper can stay in New York City if we Sons of Liberty know of it."

"But you must not," expostultaed Mrs. Drew again. "Wait until he comes."

At this moment the outer door of the hall opened and a little later Lieutenant Pickering himself entered the room. There was a scowl upon his boyish face, and he glanced at the intruders sneeringly.

"May I ask to what fortune I am indebted for your presence, gentlemen?" he said.

"We have received intelligence from Albany that a document bearing one of the stamps was sent to you from that town, sir," the leader told him. "No paper with one of the odious stamps on it can be received in this city without the receiver being in danger of his per-

son and his effects. Therefore, we shall search for the paper. Children, go at once."

But at this Kitty, who with the other children had been sitting amazed and stupefied by what was taking place, broke into a wail.

"And the supper?" she wept. "Why, we haven't had one of Aunt Cornelia's Nieu Jar cookies yet. And so good they are too."

"Take what you can carry in your hands," the man said kindly. "But go at once. You are best away from here."

"Oh, but to go without the Company have eaten supper," protested the little girl. "Oh, my party! My party!"

"Never mind, Kitty. It was a nice party anyhow," consoled Newty Timm. "A good, good time did we have."

"And sometime you shall all come again," said Mistress Drew, who was plainly upset over the happening. "But now 'tis best for you to go."

Sadly the children went from the room, Kitty with lagging steps, for she was loth to leave the nice things Aunt Cornelia had provided for her guests. Lieutenant Pickering observed her downcast looks and patted her gently on the shoulder.

"Fate hath dealt hardly with both of us to-day, little one," he said with bitterness. "What it hath yet in store I know not. But stay! a memento shall you take

with you. A souvenir of the day that was to have brought happiness to both of us, and—did not. You have been a true little friend, and loyal beyond belief in one of your sex. But you are young, and know no better. Take, therefore, this box as a keepsake. If it, or its contents, doth not please you, burn it, and all that it contains."

With a laugh that was not good to hear the young officer stepped to a small table upon which stood a gold lacquered box, open and filled with gloves. Tossing out the gloves he went to the supper table and began to fill the box with cakes. One of the Committee of Citizens, engaged with his fellows in searching the sleeping apartment, turned and glanced keenly at him. Seeing naught but a desire to comfort a grieved child in the young man's action he resumed his task. As he did so the box disappeared in the folds of the officer's roquelaure,[1]—he was still hatted and cloaked for the street,—then reappeared so quickly that it seemed not to have been out of sight. Closing the lid with a snap the lieutenant handed the box to Kitty, saying carelessly:

"Faith! 'twill be better than to carry the cakes in the hand, and perchance you may find some use for the box. Go quickly, little one. Your friends wait, and the gentlemen here grow impatient."

Before Kitty could speak she found herself pushed gently from the room.

[1] Roquelaure.—A cloak.

CHAPTER XVI

THE BOX OF CAKES

SCARCELY conscious of the box that she held in her hand Kitty joined her frightened guests who were hurriedly donning wraps in an outer room.

"Oh, the supper!" she wailed. "Aunt Cornelia had made such good things! And the lieutenant had syllabub to go with the cakes." She burst into tears.

"Never mind, Kitty," spoke one of the girls soberly. "It cannot be helped, and you did your best."

They crowded about her for an instant giving vent to their disappointment in sundry ejaculations, and then, almost before she knew it, they were gone, leaving her and Newty Timm alone with Johanna. As Kitty became aware of the fact she roused herself.

"You are to go home with us, Newty," she said. "Aunt Cornelia wishes it. You are to take supper with us, after which Cuff is to take you home in the sleigh. 'Twill be better than walking."

"I know," answered the boy. "Your aunt spoke to me about it, but do you wish it? You are so sad, jungvrowe. Had I not better go home?"

"No, Newty." Kitty spoke quickly in answer to a certain wistfulness in his voice. "I shall like to have you. I do feel bad over the end of the party. If those men had only let us have the supper I should not have minded. And such a good time as we had been having!"

"But if the officer hath offended against the liberties of the colonists it is right that his rooms should be searched, even though it does break up our party, Kitty. The citizens could not know of the supper."

"Yes; I know." Kitty wiped her eyes, and sobbed a little. "I know, Newty; yet cry I must because I am so sorry about the supper. I am sorry, too, about Lieutenant Pickering. So kind he was to me. I cry for him, too. I know not why."

They were on the street by this time, Johanna following them with Kitty's gold lacquered box in her hand. Newty Timm did not reply to the little girl for a moment, and then he put his arm around her.

"I understand, Kitty," he said. "My mother is just so. Sometimes she cries just to relieve her feelings, and

so I think it is with you. Is it not? Well then, it does good to cry. So cry on."

"That was like Dirck," said Kitty. "Dirck tells me to cry on, and then cry I cannot. And I should not. Grandmother will want me to help Aunt Cornelia about the supper. Uncle Jacobus would like it not were I to show a sad face before his friends. At what do you laugh, Newty?"

"Because when I wish you not to cry, you cry; when I tell you to cry, you cannot. So queer it seems."

"So Dirck used to tell me. He said 'twas because I was a girl. I know not why it is so with me, but so it is. And glad am I to stop crying; for I must help Aunt Cornelia."

"That was so," he agreed. "And what must I do?"

"You are like my brother, Newty, and Dirck always helped Aunt Cornelia too. You don't mind, do you?"

"I shall like it," declared the lad with fervor. "And your brother, Kitty? Have you heard naught from him?"

"We had a letter. Did you not know?" With this she told him of the letter from Dirck and in so telling she forgot for the time being the spoiling of the party, and reached home in good spirits after all. Cornelia met them at the door.

"Here hath been Alida before you," she said, folding Kitty in a close embrace. "She hath told me all of the happening. Never mind, lambkin. Next time naught

shall occur to interfere with thy pleasuring. And now into the kitchen with both of you where a good, hot supper waits. After you have eaten you shall both help me with Jacobus's friends, who are many."

After all it was a merry evening. Newty was full of pranks which kept Madame Gerritt, Cornelia and the servants in an uproar. It was full nine of the clock before Cornelia bade Cuff bring the sleigh that was to take the lad home.

"I sigh to see thee go, Hermanus," she said. "Thou art a cure for the megrims which all of us have had since Dirck was taken. I shall see to it that thou art with us often. I am sorry to see thee go."

"And I sorrow to go, Mevrouw," he made answer. "It hath been a day of rare sport with me. To-morrow I go to work the better for it."

He was gone, and Kitty ascended to her room feeling somehow very lonesome.

"He is a dear lad," she mused as she made ready for bed. On this night she undressed alone. Usually Johanna or one of the servants helped her, but upon the occasions when there was company she always went to bed unassisted. "A dear lad! almost as nice as Dirck. He helped the party like my own brother would have done. A lad of parts Aunt Cornelia said many times this evening. I wonder if Lieutenant Pickering noticed him? Oh, the box! I have not opened it, and the cakes might soil it."

With this she glanced quickly about the chamber in search of it, and finally spied it on the mantel where Johanna had carefully deposited it when she brought up Kitty's wraps. Kitty ran to the mantel and took it down carefully.

It was a long, narrow box, handsomely ornamented with gold in the fashion of the times, and opening with clasp and hinge. Kitty looked at it a long time.

" How pretty it is," she said, turning it over and over. " So good he was to give it to me. It was not his fault that the party was spoiled. I hope Grandmother will let me keep it. Why did the Committee think that he had a stamped paper, I wonder? Surely he is too kind, too good to do anything against our liberties! But the cakes must come out of it. Such a pretty box it is! Too pretty to be soiled by ' Oly Koecks ' and Nieu Jar cookies."

And like the careful little housevrouw that she was Kitty took the box to a table, opened it, then turned it upside down that the cakes might fall out. But with them came a paper. A legal looking document, folded twice. Kitty picked it up wonderingly and unfolded it.

It was a license; a marriage license for Lieutenant Richard Pickering, officer in His Majesty's service, and Gretel Van Dorm. And upon its top margin glared one of the odious stamps.

A long time Kitty gazed upon the paper. She had wished to see one of the stamps that had so upset the

citizens. She wondered greatly what one would look like. Now the one thing that came to her was the placard that she had read on the day the merchant ship, *Edward,* came into the harbor bearing the stamps:

> "PRO PATRIA
>
> "The first man that either distributes or makes use of stampt Paper, let him take care of his House, Person, & Effects.
>
> "Vox Populi.
>
> "We Dare."

And in thinking of the card a wonder grew in the girl's mind that the young officer should give to her a paper that might cause trouble were it found in the house.

"Uncle Jacobus would not have done such a thing even to save himself from the Committee," she mused, replacing the document in the box. "Nor would Dirck do it. No; nor do I believe that Newty Timm would either. And now what is to be done? Perchance after all, Lieutenant Pickering did not know that it was there."

But as she thought this a sudden remembrance came to her of the young officer's action in filling the box with the cakes. The glance that he had cast at the Commit-

tee, and then the quick fling of his roquelaure as the box was hidden for a moment in its folds. Child though she was she understood fully what it would mean should the paper be found in the house. There had been several instances in the city where men had tried to use the stamped paper, and they had been roughly used when it was discovered. Should it be known that an English officer had given her such a paper it would go hard with him. The temper of the people was such that the act would not be tolerated. Kitty shivered again. The candle sputtered and hissed in its socket, flickered dimly for a second, and then went out. Kitty started, then crept tremblingly into the high tester bed, the box clasped tightly in her little hands.

"Had I better tell Uncle Jacobus about it?" she asked herself. "Or Grandmother? They would know what to do. And yet——" Kitty came to a pause in her musings for well she knew that since the taking of Dirck neither Jacobus nor Madame Gerritt entertained any great liking for the English soldiery. They were the visible marks of a subjection which they opposed.

"They would not like it, and perchance after all the lieutenant did not know it was there. He was kind about the party; so there! I won't tell anyone about it until I see him," she decided suddenly. "There must be a mistake; or, perchance, he thought that no one would hurt a little girl even if the paper were to be found on me. Yes; that must be it. I will see him to-

morrow, and tell him that he must take it back." And having arrived at this decision she fell asleep.

But the next day it turned very cold. So cold that those who had no business went not abroad from their firesides, so Kitty could not go out. The morning's work was done, and Cornelia gone to see after the dinner when Madame Gerritt called to her:

"Come to me, little one. So deep a study dost thou seem to be in that thou hast not half attended to thy tasks. Is it about the party? Cornelia told me somewhat of the matter, and that no supper was eaten by the children. Come, tell me of the affair. We have time for a nice long talk."

And gladly the little maid went to her; laying her head on her knee she told her all the happening. She told also of how she had run into the young officer on Flatten Barrack, and how she had carried letters to Gretel Van Dorm for him, and why he had been kind enough to let the children have the use of his quarters. She spoke of the good time the children had had, of the search, and the uneaten supper; but of the stamped paper she said no word.

"Let me see the box that he gave you, Kitty," was her grandmother's only remark when she had finished the telling.

Obediently Kitty ran to her room for the box, but she slipped the troublesome paper from it, putting it under her pillow before going back to her grandmother.

"And have you told me all, Kitty?" questioned the lady as she took the box and examined it carefully.

The girl hesitated.

"I wish to know everything, lambkin," urged her grandmother gravely.

"There is one thing that I have not told you, dear Grandmother," answered Kitty slowly. "I fear me that 'twould bring harm to Lieutenant Pickering, and that you would not wish."

"I wish harm to no one, Kitty, but Grandmother does not wish thee to have secrets from her. To blame thou hast not been about the letters, but both Grietje and the young man did wrong to bring you into the matter. But this one thing, my child? Tell me——"

At this moment Cornelia entered the room, and with her came Mistress Drew.

"Such a pother over nothing," exclaimed the latter as she seated herself for a talk. "After all, Madame Gerritt, those children might just as well have eaten their waffles. The men found naught. I was so sorry for the little ones; they were so disappointed. But sorrier still was I for the lieutenant. It seems that his plans were all laid for a marriage to Gretel Van Dorm. He obtained a special license from the Governor, though the men had it that the stamped paper came from Albany, for the license was stamped. Well, when Gretel found that the license bore one of the stamps she would not be married. La! but he is cut up."

"So there was a stampt paper after all?" observed Madame Gerritt shrewdly. "What became if it, Mistress Drew?"

"I know not. Lieutenant Pickering declares that he has it not, which is well. I won't have it in the house. It is not safe. It will bring trouble to anyone who has it."

"'Tis very apt to do so," agreed Kitty's grandmother.

Kitty waited to hear no more, but stole softly from the room and up to her own little chamber. Her heart was very heavy, and she was afraid. She drew the paper from under her pillow and gazed at it miserably.

"It must not stay here," she said, whispering because of her fear. "But what shall I do with it? Where shall I put it? It must not be found where it would bring trouble to anyone. Not to Uncle Jacobus, nor Grandmother. I am to blame for its being here, and to me should the trouble come. I wish it not, but it must be so. Ah! such a trouble as these stamps have brought!"

She sighed. Then, after a moment of thought, took the document to her kas, or Holland chest, and raising the lid pushed it under the piles of snowy linen that the chest contained. The chest was Kitty's own. Such a chest as every little Dutch maiden possessed in which were stored linens against the time when the little girl should have a home of her own.

The days passed. Days of anxiety, filled with fears

and forebodings. Passed without Kitty catching even so much as a glimpse of the officer though she watched for him unceasingly. Passed, too, without a visit from Gretel Van Dorm, though formerly the young girl had been wont to call every day. And then, after a week of fearsome waiting, Kitty caught sight of the lieutenant going down the Broad Way just as she opened the door of the hall to brush the snow from the stoop. Instantly the task was forgotten, and cloakless and hatless, the little maid sped down the street after him.

"Lieutenant Pickering! Lieutenant Pickering!" she called breathlessly. "Speak to you I must."

The young man stopped abruptly as he heard the call and turned upon her with a quizzical smile.

"Well, Kate, Kathy, Kitty, or Kit, what is it?" he asked. "Something of dire import, I'll be bound, else you would not run after me without cloak or hood. Is't another party?"

"Oh!" gasped Kitty tearfully, shocked at his light manner. "'Tis about the paper."

"The paper? What paper?" he asked, becoming grave all at once.

"The one that was in the gold lacquered box that you gave me. Oh, won't you take it back? It makes me so afraid."

"Odd's life!" ejaculated the young man excitedly. "Do you mean to tell me that you have that paper yet? Why, child, I meant for you to burn it. Dost not re-

member that I said that if the box, or its contents, were not liked you could burn them? I meant the paper. I thought that you would understand."

"Well then, I did not," said Kitty weakly. Those days of anxiety were beginning to tell on her. "And I fear to have it."

"Fear to have it! Of course you do. Egad! the temper of the people is such that anyone would fear to have it. Go at once and burn it. And how many have you told? Faith! I'll have to get the Governor's good offices in this."

"No one knows of it, sir. Told anyone I have not. I thought that it might bring trouble upon you, and you had been so good. But—but I should like to tell my grandmother." And now that the end of her trouble was in sight Kitty began to cry.

"Told no one?" he repeated in amazement. "You have gone a whole week with that burden upon your poor little mind! What a loyal little friend you are, Kitty. I have been a chuff. And you feared to get me into trouble? See here! I'll go with you, and we'll both tell your grandmother."

With this he took her hand and walked back with her to the house.

CHAPTER XVII

THE LIEUTENANT MAKES A PROMISE

MADAME GERRITT was in the hall when Kitty and the lieutenant entered. She looked her surprise, but all she said was:

"So cold it is, Kitty, to leave the hall door open. And thou hast been out without a wrap."

"Yes, Grandmother, but I ran out in a hurry," explained the little girl as though that excused everything. "'Tis Lieutenant Pickering, Grandmother."

"Thou art welcome, sir," spoke the lady with cold dignity. "'Tis time that you and I had a talk."

"It is for that very purpose that I have come, madam," said the young fellow briefly.

"Then, I pray you, come into the sitting-room," said she a trifle more graciously. "The open door hath made the hall too cold for even a moment's standing."

"Thank you, madam." Lieutenant Pickering fol-

lowed her into the sitting-room, where a royal fire blazed in the large open fireplace, and took the high-backed Windsor chair that she proffered him with some diffidence, for her manner was far from cordial.

Kitty felt that something was amiss. She had never before seen her grandmother treat a guest with so much coldness. Going over to the fire she stood in front of it, holding out her hands to the warmth, fearful all at once of what her grandmother might say about the stamped paper. Doubtless Lieutenant Pickering noticed her sudden timidity for he turned to her kindly.

"Get that paper, Kitty," he said. "I shall not be at ease until it is destroyed."

"Nor I," agreed Kitty's grandmother quickly. "A full week hath it been in the house, a source of worry and anxiety; for at any moment it might bring trouble upon us. A firebrand it is in very truth. Bring it hither at once, Kitty."

But Kitty did not move. She stood staring at her grandmother in wide-eyed amazement.

"Grandmother, how did you know that it was here? I told not of it."

"There was no need to tell me, little one. Grandmother could see thy worry, and suspected the cause. Then, too, when I saw the gold lacquered box, I was quite sure that there was purpose in the gift. So I took the care of thy room upon myself for the week that the paper might not be discovered."

"And you saw it?" gasped Kitty.

"Yes, I saw it, little one. But go! Bring it here quickly, for I, too, shall not be at ease until it be destroyed. And while the child is gone, sir," turning toward the officer, "perchance you will explain why one so young should be burdened with so weighty a matter? Was it well done in an officer of His Majesty's service?"

"Zounds, madam! 'tis not as you think," cried the lieutenant, his face flushing. "Hear me, I beseech you, before you judge. That it was not well done, I grant; but what would you? Consider for one moment my predicament! Here was the Committee of Colonials who would search me as soon as their examination of the premises was completed. I had the damaging document upon me, and I was not minded to be roughly handled should it be discovered. I slipped it in the box on the impulse of the moment, saying that if either the box or its contents was not to Kitty's liking she should burn them. I thought that she would understand. I did not dream that she would keep a thing like that for any length of time. I forgot her youth, because she had shown herself to be loyal to a confidence. I was wrong, madam. I see it plainly."

"It may be that I have misjudged you, sir. If, as you say, you meant not for Kitty to keep the paper, it alters the complexion of the matter. I can well understand the impulse to get rid of so mischievous a thing.

Therefore, speak on, and relate the whole of the happening."

Madame Gerritt's manner was so much kinder that Kitty waited to hear no more but sped up-stairs with lighter heart.

" 'Twas a special license for my marriage to Gretel Van Dorm from Sir Henry Moore, the Governor," Lieutenant Pickering was saying as she reëntered the room with the paper. " Why the Committee should believe that 'twas sent to me from Albany I know not. Yet stay! I do now recall having writ to a brother officer in that place that should the Governor fail to grant me the license I might ask him to secure it for me there. The letter might have been intercepted. But here is Kitty with the paper."

He rose as he finished speaking, took the document from the little girl, opened it, and glanced over it before laying it on the blazing logs.

" It lost me a wife," he said, patting Kitty on the shoulder, " but it proved to me how loyal a little friend could be." To his consternation Kitty burst into tears as she saw the paper begin to blaze.

" So glad am I," she sobbed as the last vestige of the license went up in smoke. " So glad am I to see it go. Oh! I've been so afraid. Now I need not fear when anyone knocks at the door or comes in quickly. Oh! I'm glad 'tis gone!"

Madame Gerritt rose quickly and took her into her arms.

"You see," she said to the young man. "It hath been too heavy a burden for her. A child she is, and not able to bear secrets of so weighty a nature."

"I see," replied the officer with deep contrition. "I see, and shall offend no more. Neither with this little one, nor any other. I knew not that one so young could be so true to a trust. Her loyalty to me hath touched me deeply, madam. I shall never forget it. The time may come when I might be of service to her; or, if not to her, to some member of this family. If such need arise I pray you to command me. These be parlous days, and who knows but that Fortune's chance may be such that the good offices of a King's man may not come amiss."

"I thank you, sir," responded the lady graciously. "If need arise I shall not fail to call upon you. And you? Perchance that Fortune of which you speak may bring to pass a realization of your happiness. Our young people who marry have given up the licenses because of the stamps, and are cried in church. I think Grietje would not object to that."

"But Mynheer Van Dorm would," and the officer's lips curled into a grim smile. "Howsoe'er Gretel may feel I know not; nor do I care." With this he made a stiff obeisance and left them. Kitty glanced up at her grandmother with tear-dimmed eyes.

"I grieve for him, Grandmother," she said. "So kind and good he is. So glad am I that he did not get into trouble about the paper when he could not marry Grietje."

"Yes," assented her grandmother thoughtfully. "Yet Grietje is the more to be pitied. She cared for him, yet because of her belief that 'twas not right to use the stamps she hath given up her happiness. It was a noble thing for her to do. A girl she is to be proud of. However, it may be that all will be well between them soon. Such affairs have a way of righting themselves. But, little one, Grandmother must talk with thee. Why didst thou not come to me about the paper? Grandmother could have told thee what 'twere best to do in such a case."

"I know, Grandmother, but I feared to," admitted Kitty frankly. "It seemed to me that I was to blame in letting the paper come here. If I had not felt so about the party 'twould not have happened. And then I feared that if you knew about it, you might think it right to tell about it. I did not wish harm to come to Lieutenant Pickering because I was sorry for him, but still, Grandmother, I did think it wrong for him to give it to me. I hid it in my own kas so that if it were found it would be known that it belonged to me, and that I was to blame that it was here. I wished not to bring trouble upon thee."

"But see now, my child! a whole week of misery to

thyself and to me might have been saved hadst thou come to me anent it. I would have sent for the lieutenant to come to me. We would have talked over the matter, and the paper would have been burned even as it was to-day. Grandmother likes it not that her lambkin should keep anything from her."

"Dear Grandmother, never again shall I do so." Kitty flung her arms about the lady's neck and held her tight. "I see now that it was wrong, but truly, Grandmother, I liked not to do it. I won't any more. So there!"

"I do not mean to chide thee, little one, for thou wast drawn into the matter unwittingly, and art not to blame save in keeping this from me. Only Grandmother is older, wiser, and perchance better able to judge what were best under these, or other, circumstances. Well then, 'tis past. I think thou hast learned a lesson, so we will say no more anent it."

"But I like to talk to you about it, Grandmother. I wanted to all the time. 'Tis so good to be able to tell thee all and everything," declared Kitty, snuggling closer in the loving arms that held her.

"So, little one?" A smile lighted up the tender face bending over the child. "Well then, talk we shall. Begin, therefore, at the beginning, and unravel the whole of the affair to me. All of it I have heard, but no matter. Say on, my child."

There followed a long, sweet talk which left both lady

and child brighter and happier. To Kitty, unused to concealments or deceptions of any kind, it brought the relief of being able to speak freely. To her grandmother it gave a clearer insight into the child's heart and mind than she had ever known.

"So staunch she is, and true," she murmured, drawing Kitty close with sudden tenderness. "My little white lambkin! God grant that those she loves may be as leal to her."

The days passed. Uneventful days now, but pleasant for that very reason. After the stress of unusual happenings days in which naught occurs to mar the commonplaceness of every-day life are welcomed for their peacefulness. And so it was with Kitty. Since the time when she had helped Old Ben to escape impressment she had been in a fever of excitement. Now there was sliding, sporting and racing with Don, merry afternoons with the Company skating on the Collect, tasks at home and school, for she now returned to school, and, best of all, rare fun when Newty Timm came for a visit.

So the winter passed. Blustering March gave way to dewy April. Crocuses bloomed and died. The trees budded and leaved, and all the world was full of greenery. Presently the meadows were blue with violets, and the slopes on the uplands were white with the starry blossoms of the dogwood trees. It was May. May, with bright sunshine and cerulean skies. May, and in the gardens the flower-beds were aglow with

gaudy colored tulips, and the apple trees were great rosy bouquets set in the ground, and the scent of flowers was everywhere. Every breath of the balmy south wind whirled fragrant petals in little eddies through the air. May, and on the broad expanse of bay and rivers tiny craft with white sails darted over the sparkling waters like sea-gulls. It was delightful in New York, but Madame Gerritt discovered all at once that the town was too warm, and announced her intention of removing immediately to The Oaks, as the bouwerie, or farm, was called. The *New York Gazette* spoke of it as the country seat of Mr. Jacobus Gerritt.

"'Twill be good to get in the country once more," declared the lady. "And thou, Kitty! methinks thou art looking pale. 'Tis time we were leaving town. Jacobus had the gardens started long since, and we have waited o'erlong for the flitting, but what with the unsettled state of things we knew not what to do. Hermanus Timm goes with us, little one, so thou wilt not be lonesome for a playmate. Jacobus hath made arrangements. He likes the lad. If ever the Stamp Act be repealed so that all can be as of yore he thinks of taking him into the shop. He misses Dirck."

"And so do I, Grandmother," broke from Kitty in a wail. "I like Newty. Next to Dirck I like him best of any boy I know, but there is no one like my brother."

"Yes; so we all think, little one. So, as we cannot

have Dirck we are glad to get Hermanus. A good lad he is to have, too. A kind boy to his mother, and hard working. And so cheery with all of it. My heart warms to him."

So it came about that one beautiful morning in May the flitting took place. Both Newty Timm and Kitty were bubbling over with high spirits as the great lumbering coach drawn by a pair of Flemish geldings drew up before the stoop, and they clambered in. Madame Gerritt followed more slowly, and away they started.

" Oh, there is Don following us, Grandmother," cried Kitty suddenly as they came opposite the Oswego Market. It had been decided that Don should come later with Cornelia and Jacobus.

" 'Tis no matter, little one. Let him sit with thee. Hermanus may come beside me." With a joyous bark Don leaped in as the coach stopped for him, and settled himself by Kitty's side, his satisfaction plainly manifested at the arrangement. Again they started.

From the Broad Way they turned into the highway which ran past the green fields of the Common, where glimpses of the sparkling waters of the Collect could be had through the trees. Past the tan yards and the Tea Water Pump, and around the base of the steep hill which lay to the east of the Collect they went, coming presently into the Bowery Lane.

The little city was growing rapidly, and the narrow streets leading from the lane to the water were filled

with sailors' lodging-houses, and the homes and shops of those who ministered to Jack ashore.

On the left of the lane was a village plot laid out in blocks still but sparsely settled, while a little further on stood the "Bull's Head Tavern," surrounded by pens for cattle, sheep, and hogs. The public slaughter house lay but a short distance from the tavern, and all around were butcher shops and the houses of those employed in them. Newty Timm stood up quickly as the carriage bowled by a shop where some boys, wearing long white aprons, stood in the doorway.

"'Tis where I work," he explained, waving the three-looped beaver hat that Jacobus had given him. "Believe that I was in truth going with you they would not. They asked me to wave at them as I passed."

Beyond the slaughter house the lane became densely wooded, and so many villas of prominent citizens lay to the right and left of it that it seemed rightly named the Bowery Lane, for its sole use seemed to be to connect the farms with the city. But neither the charming villa of James De Lancey, nor the beautiful mansion of Nicholas Bayard caught more than a passing glance from the three in the coach. It was not until the bouweries of the Stuyvesants were reached that Madame Gerritt ordered Old Peter to drive slowly that the children might look at them.

"There is where Petrus Stuyvesant, our last governor, lived," she said, indicating a large, roomy house of

Dutch architecture surrounded by flower gardens and orchards of peach, pear and apple trees.[1] "His grandson lives there now, and often do I wonder if he takes as much delight in the bouwerie as did his grandfather. Often have I heard my mother tell how much he loved it. And the city he loved, too, and never would he reenter it after it fell under English rule. Here he came, after going to Holland to answer the charges made against him, and here he died. It broke his heart when New Amsterdam became New York."

"So my grandfather says," commented Newty Timm. "He, too, hath never been to the city, for so his father raised him. Nor was his father there after the English came. To me it seems foolish and wrong. For see now: his best did the Governor do to hold the city, but the people wished it surrendered to the English. There was naught then for him to do but to give it up. The people should say whom they wish to serve: Holland or England. Methinks the Governor should have gone to see if the city he loved fared well after the change."

Madame Gerritt adjusted her bridge spectacles over her nose and gazed a long moment at the boy.

"Those are the words of youth, my lad," she said at length. "Judge him not. 'Tis not easy for the old to accept change, and none knew what it might bring to the

[1] This farm lay near what is Thirteenth Street now, between Third Avenue and the East River.

Colony. Many of the residents felt as the Governor did, and, fearful of disaster, removed from the city. So my mother hath told me. Yet both city and colony prospered under the new rule; that is, until of late."

So the talk went. The beautiful ride bringing many reminiscences from the lady, and exclamations of wonder and delight from her youthful companions. Beyond the dreary stretches of the Stuyvesant salt marshes, or sunken meadows, which lay on their right close to the water's edge, the lane swerved sharply to the northwest from which point it was no longer called the Bowery Lane but was known as the Highroad to Boston. Presently it took an eastward course, after which it turned to the northward again. At this juncture there was much whispering and laughing between the boy and the girl, and the lady glanced at them questioningly. Kitty made answer.

"Close your eyes, Grandmother. So! now hold them just that way for a moment."

A smile trembled about the grandmother's lips, and a twinkle crept into her eyes, as though she knew what was coming. However, she made no remark, but closed her eyes tightly in obedience to the little girl's command.

"Now, Newty," cried Kitty, laughing. Shyly the boy rose and kissed the lady.

"We are on the Kissing Bridge,"[1] he explained as

[1] This bridge was at what is now Fifty-second Street and Second Avenue. There was another Kissing Bridge at Chatham Street and Baxter Street.

Madame Gerritt opened her eyes. "'Tis the privilege of a gentleman to kiss the lady by whom he sits when they cross it."

Madame Gerritt laughed.

"It minds me of my youthful days, Hermanus," she said. "It hath been years since I was kissed on this bridge." And with this she leaned from the coach and gazed meditatively at the quaint stone bridge which crossed a babbling brook.

"I know, Grandmother," cried Kitty eagerly. "It was Grandfather. And did he kiss thee just here?"

"No; we were coming from the other way. Let me see. 'Twas just here, I think." At this point the coach left the bridge for the road. "Yes, it was just here. We were coming home from a sleighing frolic to Harlem."

"But why, Grandmother, did he not kiss thee when first you crossed it?" questioned Kitty, with the disconcerting directness of a child. "There is but this road leading from the city to Harlem. You must have crossed the bridge in going to the frolic."

"I was young and foolish, little one, and we had quarreled," answered the lady with something of a sigh. "But there! no more questions, for already do I see the chimneys of the bouwerie through the trees. Here we are at the turning of the road which leads into our own lane. I am glad to be here. I was tired of the town."

CHAPTER XVIII

A QUEST FOR TREASURE

THE carriage turned from the Highroad into a lane that went winding in and out among great trees until it reached the house which stood in the midst of a stretch of farm and woodland with nowhere another house in sight. A spacious farmhouse it was, with a steep peaked roof with a weathercock on the point, built in the style handed down by the first Dutch settlers. On either side of the winding lane were rich fields green with the promise of wheat, of rye, of buckwheat and of Indian corn. Nearer the house were the orchards that later in the year would be burthened with ruddy fruit, but which now were masses of pink and white blossoms.

Hard by was the vast barn with pigeons cooing about the eaves, and flocks of turkeys, geese, ducks and chickens that disputed its yard with numerous pigs. Cows and calves, horses and colts grazed in the pastures, and lambs gamboled about the ewes in the meadows. There was everything to gladden childish hearts, and Newty Timm seemed never to tire of going over the place. The gardens, the fields, the woods and the water were an unfailing source of delight, and Kitty found great pleasure in showing them to him. Best of all did the boy seem to like the rocky nooks overhung with trees which indented the shore of the Sound River.

"So much do you come down to the river, Newty," remarked Kitty one morning when they had been at the farm about a week. They were sitting under the shade of a broad chestnut tree on the cool grassy carpet that swept down to the water's edge. About them was a copse of oaks and chestnuts which protected a small indentation of the shore. The beach sloped gradually within the cove, but the current swept deep and black and rapid along its jutting points. "Always when we come here you look and look at the water. 'Tis a sailor you should be like my brother, Dirck."

"A sailor? No." Newty Timm's eyes rested smilingly upon her for a moment then turned again to the river which at this place had the appearance of a lake. "The water I like when there are hills, and fields, and rocks all covered with trees around it as it is here." His

They Were Sitting Under the Shade of a Broad Chestnut Tree

glance swept appreciatively the green islands that lay like emeralds on the broad surface of the water, the rippling waves of the beautiful but dangerous strait of Hell Gate, the tree-clad heights of Nassau Island, falling at length upon the rocky coast of Manhattan. "These I like," he said again. "But water without land I do not care for. To be on deck of yon vessel," indicating a large ship that lay at anchor in the far distance, "to be aboard that ship with naught but the sea around me would not please me."

"But you come down here so much, Newty. If it is not to see the water at what do you look? So often do you walk along the shore. 'Tis as though you were looking for something."

"Well then, I am looking for something. I will tell you about it, Kitty." The boy flushed under her direct glance and grew suddenly embarrassed. "'Tis to find signs of treasure that I come here so much."

"Treasure? What sort of treasure?"

"Gold," said Newty Timm. "A pot, or a chest of it."

"Why, Newty! do you think that there is gold to be found hereabouts?" cried Kitty excitedly.

"I know not; but there might be. I will tell you why I think there is. To the butcher shop where I work come many sailors from the lodging-houses near the river. Often have I heard them talk, and much do they tell of pirates, and of Captain Kidd. 'Tis said that all

along this shore, and the shore of Nassau Island likewise, he buried great treasure. And see now how easy 'twould be to do that very thing. We knew not that yon ship was lying out there until yesterday morning. She had come through the Sound either very early in the morning, or perchance through the night. When or how we cannot tell for a certainty. So it might have been done by Captain Kidd. Why, he might have slipped in at any time and buried gold right here where we are sitting, and no one would be the wiser. So then do I seek to find signs of buried treasure about here."

"What kind of signs, Newty?" cried Kitty eagerly. "Tell me so that I can help you look. Oh! wouldn't it be good fun to find a pot of gold right here on our own place!"

"Well, it would be a good thing to have," agreed the lad gravely. "If I found one a butcher's boy I would not be."

"You would not? What should you do, Newty?"

"To the forest would I go to learn to be a great hunter, Kitty. Like my uncle was. With only his rifle and one attendant he went from Albany into the wilderness. He felled the big trees that he might cross rivers. He shot deer and wild animals for food, and dressed himself in their skins. He fished, and learned the ways of the forest. So would I do."

"But there are Indians in the woods, Newty," spoke Kitty fearfully. "So cruel they are, and ugly."

"Yes, I know," answered he in a matter-of-fact tone. "But mind that I should not. Nor did my uncle. Their ways I should learn, if they would teach me. Much do they know of the growing things in the forest and of the animals, too."

"Do you wish to go very much, Newty?"

"Yes, yes; but go I cannot until I find gold to leave with my mother," cried the boy, springing to his feet with a cheery laugh. "So then let us hunt for signs of it. See now, Kitty, if there be any signs we shall find them either on the stones or the trees. Crosses mostly they are, but sometimes they are just queer marks. If any such you see tell me; for these, say the sailors, mean of a surety that treasure lies somewhere near them."

"Like these, Newty?" Kitty pointed to some faint marks on the large flat stone on which she was sitting.

The lad rose, and coming to her side bent over the stone with intent look. There were some indistinct marks upon the rock, almost obliterated by the moss that had grown on them, but Newty Timm drew a deep breath as he gazed at them.

"It's the very kind of marks that the sailors told about, Kitty," he said at length in awed tones. "See! three crosses there are. One at the top of the rock, one down here at the bottom, and this little one to one side. So dim they are that one can scarcely see them. Either

a treasure lies buried under this very rock, or those crosses point to the place where it is. Kitty, I do believe that they are in very truth signs."

"Then what is to be done?" questioned Kitty earnestly.

"First, we must look around us everywhere, on trees and stones, to see if there are any other marks just like these. It ofttimes happens that the first marks are only to help mark the location of the treasure."

"Do you truly think that there is a pot of gold buried somewhere about here?" asked Kitty as the two began carefully to scan the near-by trees and stones.

"Well then, I do, Kitty. And why should there not be? Those must be —— Oh, see! here is another mark on this tree."

Not far from the flat stone upon which the crosses had been found was a clump of trees standing around a rocky knoll. Most of the trees were not very large, some, in fact, being mere bushes; but among them stood a giant pine that far out-topped all the rest, and could be seen for a great distance, both from the land and from the river. It had, in fact, been a mark for skippers to steer by since the country was settled, and possibly many an Indian guided his canoe by it long before the invading white man put his foot upon the shores of Manhattan. On the trunk of this great pine there was a rude mark, cut in the form of a cross, upon its surface. Newty Timm's face was white as he pointed to it.

"See," he said in trembling tones, "the middle cross on the rock points directly toward this tree. Kitty, I believe that if we dig here at its foot we shall find a treasure."

"Then let's begin to dig right off," cried Kitty. "Come on, Newty! I'll go to the house for a spade, and get Uncle Jacobus to come and help us."

"Wait a minute, Kitty. We must not tell anyone about it until we have found it. If we do it may disappear. When we have dug it up you and I will carry it in and put it down before your uncle and grandmother. Won't they be surprised?"

"Yes, yes; but when do we begin the digging, Newty?"

"Not until midnight, Kitty. Then do we come very quietly with our spades, speaking no word, for if we utter but one word while digging the pot of gold is sure to sink out of sight forever. So the sailors say."

"O-oh!" Kitty drew back from him shiveringly. "I don't dare to come out here at midnight, Newty. I should be afraid."

"Well then, let me see." The boy stood for a moment in deep thought. "Sometimes they dig just after sunset. Of course, 'tis surer to be found when one digs at midnight, but we will try it first after sunset. You will not fear to come then, will you?"

"Not if I am with you, Newty. 'Twill be better

then anyway, for see now! Should we dig at midnight Uncle Jacobus and Grandmother would be gone to bed, and show them the gold we could not. Now they will be up."

"That was so," agreed Newty Timm. "Well then, just after the sun sets we will come here and dig for the gold. Now mind! not a word to any until we have the treasure."

And with this agreement the two went back to the house to wait for the evening with what patience they could muster. All through the day they were busied completing their arrangements, consulting each other in whispers as to what they should do, and were altogether so mysterious in their conduct that the older people smiled knowingly at each other, well aware that something unusual was afoot.

The red glow of the sunset had faded from the sky, and long, dark shadows lay under the trees when the boy and girl stole softly from the house, carrying a lanthorn and a spade. They had taken the precaution to fasten Don in his kennel lest he should follow them and make too much noise. As they drew near the tall pine the boy whispered to the little girl:

"Remember not to make a sound while we are digging, Kitty, lest the buccaneer rise to fight us."

"Buccaneer?" whispered Kitty questioningly. "What buccaneer, Newty?"

"Why, the dead buccaneer, Kitty. One is buried

with every treasure to guard the gold. Should a word be spoken while the digging goes on, he rises to fight those who are molesting the treasure."

"Oh, Newty!" gasped Kitty, stopping short under the trees, her blue eyes wide with fright. "You did not tell me about him. I—I am afraid to go on."

"Pooh! he is dead, and harm you he cannot unless you speak. Beside, am I not with you? I would not let a dead buccaneer, or a live one either, hurt you. Think how pleased the grandmother and the uncle will be when they see the pot of gold we shall bring them. Come now. Nothing shall harm you, I promise."

Kitty followed him reluctantly. The adventure which had seemed so delightsome when they had planned it in the morning was assuming an aspect that she did not like. Secretly she was beginning to be very much afraid, but she was ashamed to say so; for Newty, taking her coming for granted, now went forward boldly. Fast fell the shadows, growing longer and darker under the trees until a dim twilight surrounded them. The boy lighted the lanthorn, and gave it to Kitty to carry while he shouldered the spade.

In the dim flicker of the lanthorn the appearance of things was changed. Though familiar with the spot it now seemed weird and unreal to Kitty. The tall pine tree stood out from its fellows like some ghostly sentinel. A deep stillness brooded over the cove so profound that the rippling of the current along the rocky shore

sounded like a waterfall, and the roaring of Hell Gate could easily be distinguished.

Newty Timm stopped under the pine tree, and taking the lanthorn from Kitty held it up so that he could see the rude cross cut on its surface. From this he drew a line straight down to the base of the tree, handed the lanthorn back to Kitty, placing his finger on his lips as he did so in token of silence. Quietly then he picked up the spade and began to dig.

The minutes seemed hours to the watching little girl. With difficulty she suppressed a scream as a whippoorwill sounded its mournful notes in the pine tree under which they stood. The boy glanced up apprehensively as the bird's cry sounded, and smiled approval at Kitty's continued muteness. But Kitty was trembling, and more than once she found herself wishing that the matter were well over and she was back in the house. Presently, after what seemed an interminable time, but which in reality was not more than a half-hour, the spade struck something hard. Newty paused long enough to flash a smile at Kitty, then began to throw out the dirt quickly. He had made a hole by this time about two feet deep, and Kitty held the lanthorn over it to look inside. As she did so a groan, hollow and deep, sounded upon the stillness of the night.

There came a shriek from Kitty, and turning she ran affrightedly toward the house. And she was not alone. Fast after her came Newty Timm, spade forgotten in

the fear that assailed him. Into the hall where Madame Gerritt, Cornelia and Jacobus were, they burst, their white faces betokening a dire happening of some nature.

"Dunder and Blitzen, children," cried Jacobus, flinging down the *New York Gazette*. "What hath occurred?"

"Oh, Uncle Jacobus," cried Kitty, running to him, "the dead buccaneer is after us."

"The dead buccaneer? Hath the child lost her wits? Hermanus, what hath frightened you?"

"We were digging for treasure," explained Newty Timm when he had somewhat recovered himself. "We had just found it when we heard a groan, and thought that the dead buccaneer who is always buried with gold to guard it was after us."

"By the blessed Saint Nicholas!" ejaculated Mr. Gerritt. "What next? Tell all of the matter, Hermanus. Cease thy trembling, little one. A dead man it was not. The dead harm no one."

And then from the beginning Newty Timm related the happening, and that from the signs he was sure that treasure was buried under the pine tree.

"And we had just found the top of either the chest, or kettle, that holds it when the groan came. It sounded as though it came from the place where we were digging."

"We must see at once what it was," observed Jacobus, rising. "A prowler it might be, or perchance some

poor fellow may be lying there in pain. Get Don, Hermanus."

The little procession, led by Mr. Gerritt and the two children, left the house. Madame Gerritt and Cornelia brought up the rear with Don frisking gayly about them.

Under the pine tree Jacobus paused, and taking the lanthorn looked down into the hole that Newty had dug.

"Too bad, my boy," he said kindly, laying a hand on Newty's shoulder. "But naught is there but a flat stone. As for the marks, they are curious in truth. Some time thou and I will look into them further; but now——"

At this moment came the unmistakable sound of a groan. Startled, the group looked into each other's faces, waiting for it to come again. Not so Don. With a quick, short bark he darted into a clump of brush which grew just beyond the pine tree. A moment later Jacobus went crashing after him with the lanthorn while the two women and the children drew close together to wait. A long time it seemed to them that they stood there, and then the silence was broken by a sobbing cry from Jacobus:

"Gott in Himmel! 'Tis Dirck! My boy! My boy!"

CHAPTER XIX

DIRCK'S STORY

Of what took place in the next few moments Kitty ever afterward had but a confused remembrance. She knew that at Jacobus's cry she, her grandmother, and Cornelia had run to the thicket beyond the pine tree where they found her uncle kneeling beside the slender form of a youth who lay prone upon the sand. The dim rays of the lanthorn fell full upon the white drawn face, revealing in very truth the countenance of Dirck Gerritt.

He was in an unconscious condition, an occasional moan being the only sign of vitality. A large bruise shone lividly on his forehead which, with his water-soaked garments, made his plight pitiable in the ex-

treme. So pale was he, so quiet he lay, that Kitty thought him dead, and with a heart-broken sob she flung herself down beside him.

"He is not dead, little one," comforted her uncle as he rose from the boy's side. "Not dead, but we must get him to the house at once. Mother, Cornelia, no time is there for weeping. 'Tis action that counts now. Cornelia, a warm bed and a hot posset will be needed. Mother, do thou help me to carry him until Old Peter comes. Hermanus, run and get him. Kitty, see that thy brother's hands drag not upon the ground. So! that is well."

Tenderly they lifted the slight form and bore the lad to the house; stripped the wet clothing from him, and placed him in the bed that Cornelia had ready to receive him. After what seemed an interminable length of time the boy responded to their ministrations, and opening his eyes gazed wonderingly at the anxious faces around him. Presently the vagueness gave place to recognition, and he smiled faintly; then closing his eyes again sank into slumber.

"He will do well now," observed Jacobus, with a sigh of thankfulness. "Sleep is what he needs. Mother, watch with him until my return. I go to see if I can find trace of a boat. Perchance he was in a dingey that may have been capsized when passing through Hell Gate. The strait is dangerous at half tide, and there may be other poor fellows needing attention."

For, now that their first anxiety was over, the questioning and wonderment as to how Dirck had come to be in such a condition broke forth. Jacobus and Newty Timm, followed by Kitty, who felt that she must be doing something, went down to the inlet where they had found the boy and began a careful search of the shore. But look as they would they could find no trace of a boat of any sort.

"Dunder and Blitzen!" broke from Jacobus in consternation. "Did the boy swim to us from the ship? Yon vessel must be the *Dolphin,* but surely its officers would not countenance such a feat! If they did not then has he left without permission. But to what extremity he must have been driven that he should brave the dangers of Hell Gate to get to us! He knew, of course, that we would be here at this time of year, but why, why was he not let come ashore in a boat? Are the English inhuman?"

With this he shook his great fist in the direction of the ship, and glowered fiercely off into the darkness. Kitty slipped her hand into his timidly.

"Perchance the boat went to pieces, Uncle Jacobus," she said. "Dirck will tell us about it in the morning."

"Right you are, little one. 'Tis not well to bluster until I see reason for it. Come! there is naught to be done here, and the boy may need us."

Dirck was still asleep, they found, so Jacobus sent the

rest of the family off to bed while he himself sat down to watch by the youth's bedside. With the morning Dirck awoke to consciousness, but was still in such a weak condition that Jacobus would not let him talk.

"Time enough, time enough, my boy," he said gently. "To rest now is best. Well then, in a day or two we shall see."

Secretly he feared that a search would be made for the lad, and therefore kept lookouts posted all about the place, particularly in the giant pine tree, that he might have knowledge of every move made by the ship's crew. So two days passed, each one finding Dirck stronger and more like himself. The afternoon of the third day he was up and dressed, lying back in a large upholstered chair under a majestic tulip tree that stood in front of the house. There was a mighty content in his eyes, for the family were clustered about him. Kitty nestled close by his side, and Newty Timm sat a short distance from him gazing at him with the admiration that a younger lad feels for an older one who has gone down to sea in a ship, or who has performed some feat out of the ordinary.

"How good it is to be here," remarked Dirck presently, his glance wandering affectionately from one tender face to another. "Here with you all at the dear bouwerie. I used to dream of it in the night watches, and now here I am."

"So changed you are, Dirck," spoke Kitty abruptly.

" You seem so much older and graver. And how brown you are, though that is vastly becoming."

" And the graveness is not, Kitten? " Dirck smiled at her sunnily. " Well then, you are changed too, though 'tis but a few months since I left you. You too are more thoughtful, and not the flighty little thing you used to be."

" 'Tis because of you, my brother," said Kitty, leaning forward to kiss his hand. " And now that you are back never must you go away again."

" I must go back to the ship, Kitten. I but came to see you all."

At this Jacobus took his long stemmed pipe from his mouth, knocked the ashes from it, then turned to his nephew.

" Did you not desert, Dirck? " he asked quietly.

" Desert, Uncle Jacobus? Why, no." Dirck looked at him in surprise. " The skipper would not give me leave to come ashore to see you, and so I came without. I shall go back before the *Dolphin* sails, of course."

" Go back? Why, Dirck, know you not that the skipper ——" Mr. Gerritt checked himself abruptly, and said, " Tell us how you came to be in such a plight."

" Yes, I will." Instantly they noticed that Dirck was fast falling back into the Dutch which he had not used the first two days. " 'Tis time that you should know all and everything. First then you must know that the *Dolphin* was sent here to watch the Sound lest

goods should be smuggled through it into the city. 'Tis commonly believed in England that the reason the merchants signed the Non-Importation Agreement was because they could get their goods in this manner. Could the practice be stopped the merchants, it is thought, would submit to paying the stamp duty rather than be without goods. So our ship was sent to watch for smugglers.

"Once before since I have been with the vessel has it crossed the Atlantic; but we came not to New York, though I hoped we would, but touched at the Bermudas instead. When we came into the Sound River on Monday morning, and anchored off the Barn Islands[1] I was delighted, for I knew that you would be here for the summer, and thought how easy 'twould be to come for a visit. Well then, when I went to the skipper and asked for shore leave that I might see my people, he refused the privilege, saying that if I were a good boy, obedient to orders on the next voyage over I should have a long leave. What to do I knew not, for there was talk of the ship's being sent to India. The next voyage here might not be for a year, perchance two; so I determined to come anyway.

"The skipper, I make no doubt, feared that the impressed men would desert if they had the chance; so we —there are three of us, two men and myself—were watched all that day and the next. Never had Man-

[1] Now Randall's and Ward's Islands.

hattan appeared so dear to me as I gazed at its forest-fringed shores, its shadowy uplands, and the coves and inlets of its winding shore line. So near it was, and yet so far. As well might I be on the ocean as here where I was but permitted to look at it. How often had the vision of its tree-crowned heights come to me in the dark watches of the night! And so meditating I felt that I could not leave without a visit, but a sailor seemed ever near me, watching my every move so that there was no chance.

"During the latter part of the first Dogwatch on Tuesday I stood at the bulwarks looking at the shadows that lay deep along the islands, and thinking that if I could but get into them I could make my way to the woods on the shore and escape pursuit. At this juncture the seaman who had been dogging my footsteps was ordered aft, and for the moment I was unobserved. The officer of the deck had his back toward me, and it was a good time to make the attempt to leave. In a second, I sprang on to the bulwark, holding on to the main royal back-stay, and clung to it for the briefest bit, then dropped into the water.

"The splash aroused the officer, and he gave the alarm instantly. There was a hue and cry, followed by several shots which went wide of the mark in the gathering darkness. I had intended swimming around Little Barn Island, and making directly for the shore of Manhattan, but I heard the davits of the ship creaking,

and knew that they were lowering a boat to come in pursuit of me. This being the case my best plan was to get to shore and hide in the woods. See now how easy it is to make mistakes, for instead of being on Little Barn Island as I had expected, I found myself on Great Barn. The currents were very swift and must have carried me farther than I thought. I rested for a time in the woods and then, there being no sign of the boat's dingey, went down to the shore to enter the water again to swim to Manhattan. 'Twas then that I found that I was on Great Barn Island, for the strait of Hell Gate lay before me.

"I was in a quandary. I was not minded either to stay all night in the woods on the island, or to brave the Gate's torrents; but, remembering that at low water it might be passed with safety, I determined to try it. The tide was ebbing, but it was not yet low water, as I found when I plunged in. Never have I known the Pot and the Frying-Pan to be so turbulent. I was tossed and buffeted by the waves until I was half drowned. I am a good swimmer, as you know, my uncle, but had I not known the eddies I should never have made the land. Wholly blown I managed somehow to reach the shallows where I pulled myself to my feet, and staggered forward. But so exhausted was I that I fell prone upon the sand. As I did so I must have struck something, for I knew no more. I make no doubt but that it was a rock which caused this bruise." He touched

the mark on his forehead. "How you found me I know not."

"It was due to Hermanus here who was digging for treasure," replied Jacobus. "Indeed he seems to be the good angel of the family in finding those of us who are lost. First, 'twas Kitty in the Lispenard Meadows, and now 'tis you on the sand."

"Treasure? Tell me about it, Hermanus," spoke Dirck eagerly. In common with most boys of the period he was familiar with the traditions of buried gold that were rife throughout the city.

"Like this it was," began Newty Timm, flushing slightly as all eyes were turned upon him. "At the store where I work the sailors come in to talk, and I hear what they say. Often they tell of buried treasure, and the signs that lead to its finding. So when Kitty discovered three crosses on the flat stone on which she sat, and then we found them again on the tall pine tree I was certain that there must be gold buried somewhere near by. We went to the pine tree to dig for it just after sunset because Kitty feared to go at midnight. That, you must know, is the best time to dig for it. Kitty held the light while I was digging, and the spade had just struck something hard which I thought was a chest, or the top of an iron kettle, when we heard a groan. We—we ran." The lad's face crimsoned as he recalled his flight, but the others laughed.

"We thought it was the dead buccaneer, Dirck," ex-

plained Kitty. "Newty says that one is always buried with gold to guard it. He said too that we must keep very still, and utter no word while the digging was going on. And I was quiet. Oh, very! Was I not, Newty? Quiet even though a whippoorwill sounded its plaint in the tree above us."

"Yes; quiet you were, Kitty. No one could be more so. But for myself I am ashamed that I ran. I knew not before that I was a coward."

"Well then, I don't know about that, Hermanus," spoke Jacobus kindly. "It was enough to try anyone to hear a groan come suddenly when there was but the silence of the forest around. Had I been digging for gold, and heard a groan which I believed a dead man made I should run too."

"You would?" Newty Timm's face brightened visibly, but clouded instantly. "But a dead man you would not think it was, Mynheer Gerritt."

"No, Hermanus, for the dead harm no one. But 'twas enough to try you, my boy. Most men would have run; so blame not yourself. Braver will you be next time."

"You say you were digging under the pine tree, Hermanus?" asked Dirck. "Do you know that you can see that for miles on the river? I tried to keep my eyes fixed on it while I was swimming for shore. 'Tis a mark which one would never forget. I should like to hunt for that treasure before I go back to the *Dolphin.*"

"Do you intend to go back in very truth, Dirck?" questioned his uncle. "Know you not that your leaving may be called desertion?"

"Yes, I know; but deserted I have not, as they will know if I return of my own will. I like the sea, and the life of a sailor. So go back I shall."

"But," Jacobus hesitated a moment, then, laying a hand tenderly on his nephew's knee continued, "But will there not be punishment of some sort? What will they do to you, my boy, for coming without leave?"

"I know not. It lies with the skipper. He hath the power to put me in irons, to have me lashed, or even to put me to death if he will it so. 'Tis disobedience to orders of which I have been guilty. Still, I must go back."

"To death, Dirck?" Kitty started up with a cry of anguish. "Oh, Dirck, you must not go back. Tell him that he shall not, Uncle Jacobus."

"But I have not deserted, Kitten. To see you all was my only thought, and so I shall tell the skipper. Whatever punishment he gives is right, and I must bear it. A man at sea must stand to things as he finds them."

But at this Jacobus sprang to his feet with a roar.

"You are not at sea now, Dirck. There shall be no going back until I know what will befall you. Dunder and Blitzen! what manner of man am I that I should permit my only nephew to suffer what another man

chooses to give him? Nay," as Dirck started to speak. "I will have my will in this. Have you not been torn from us without leave, or consent? Have I not some rights as your guardian, for of age you are not. There shall be no going back, I say, until I know what you are going into."

And despite the boy's protests Jacobus had his will.

CHAPTER XX

KITTY TAKES A HAND

"JOHANNA will take up the butter, Kitty. How well it hath come. See now, you shall sit here on the stoop to rest a while, and then take a run with Hermanus to the river before helping me with the dinner."

"Where is Newty, Aunt Cornelia?"

"With Dirck, Kitten. The two have become great friends, and they seem never to tire of stories of treasure and pirates. Dirck is as keen about buried gold as is Hermanus. How strange it is that boys should delight so in such tales!"

Kitty laughed.

"Well then, I am a girl, but when Newty told me about the gold I was just as much excited as he. That

is, until I learned that 'twas best to dig for it at midnight, and that a dead man was always buried with it."

"Well, as for me, much better do I like the gold of this butter. 'Tis more substantial." Cornelia gave a last approving glance inside the churn, then covered it closely, and made way for Johanna who came at this moment to carry it to the kitchen.

Kitty was tired, and gladly heeded the admonition to rest. The butter had been long in coming, and had taken more than an hour to gather. So now she snuggled back into the recesses of a settle that stood on the piazza, idly watching the flight of a butterfly winging its way from flower to flower. The twitter of some swallows that nested under the eaves, and the drone of bees were the only sounds that broke the quiet of the morning, and the tired little girl soon found herself nodding in the sunshine. It was two days since Dirck had told the story of his swimming home, and the joy of his presence had submerged the anxiety that the recital had caused. Now it came back to Kitty with startling suddenness as the voice of Jacobus came through the open door of the hall rousing her from her drowsiness.

"It is as Dirck says, Mother," he was saying. "The captain of a vessel hath the power to mete what punishment he will for any infraction of discipline. He is the master on the deck of his ship. And the discipline of a man-of-war is rigid."

"But surely, my son, you do not mean that he hath the power to put a member of his crew to death if he chooses?"

"On the sea who is there to say him nay if he wills so to do? Of course the crew might rise against him; then too, he might be brought to trial for such a deed when the ship came to land, but that would not undo the crime. Uneasy does it make me. If the punishment Dirck would receive for disobedience were all, I would not mind so much, but 'tis what might happen after the ship sails that I fear. I went to His Excellency, Sir Henry Moore, anent the matter, and was told as we have been informed many times that he had no jurisdiction over the navy, which was a law unto itself on the high seas. He advised that the boy should return to the *Dolphin* immediately, and that as he was in truth guilty of disobedience to orders he should take whatever punishment was given him like a man. What further to do I know not."

Mr. Gerritt's anxiety was plainly manifested in his voice, and a troubled look came into Kitty's eyes as she noticed it.

"The city will be searched for the lad," Jacobus continued. "And 'tis but a matter of time when he will be located. Should he be taken he will be treated as a deserter. If he goes back of his own accord, he will either be flogged, or else put in irons. Dunder and Blitzen! it makes my blood to boil when I think of it."

"Must he go back, Jacobus?" questioned his mother solicitously.

"He thinks it right that he should do so, Mother, and I wish not to offend his sense of honor. He likes the life, and why should he not? His great-great-grandfather was of the sea. 'Tis in his blood. And marked you, Mother, how manly he hath grown? If it were not for this matter of punishment I should favor his return. As it is I cannot bear it."

"Let me go to the Governor, my son. Perchance he will exert himself more for me than for thee. A woman's pleading is ofttimes more effectual than a man's."

"That is the truth, Mother. Go then; an Englishman's good offices are what is needed in the case."

Kitty started up excitedly. They were the very words that Lieutenant Pickering had used when they had burned the stamped paper. He had said:

"The time may come when I might be of service to her, or, if not to her, then to some member of this family. If such need arise I pray you to command me. These be parlous days, and who knows but that Fortune's chance may be such that the good offices of a King's man may not come amiss."

Had not the time come? Oh, could it be that he might be able to help Dirck? To think was to act with Kitty, and no sooner did the thought occur to her than she ran into the hall where her grandmother sat with

Jacobus. The lady did not heed her entrance, but went on speaking to her son:

"No time is there to be lost, Jacobus. Therefore, bid Peter to bring round the coach. I will go at once to His Excellency."

"Grandmother," cried Kitty, scarcely able to speak for eagerness, "may I go with thee?"

"Not to-day, lambkin. I am going to see Governor Sir Henry Moore on an important matter."

"Yes, I know. 'Tis about Dirck, and I too wish to go to see about him. Do you not remember, Grandmother, that Lieutenant Pickering told us to come to him if any of the family had need of his services? Uncle Jacobus just said that the good offices of an Englishman were needed in the case. Well then, is he not an Englishman? Let us go to him."

"So he did say, Kitty," exclaimed Madame Gerritt. "It had slipped my mind entirely. Now I wonder, I wonder if the lieutenant could do aught? The military have no connection with the navy, so what could he do? But see now, it will do no harm to ask him. Thou shalt go with me, little one, and together we will lay the matter before him. I much doubt, however, that it will do any good. Where is Hermanus?"

"With Dirck. They are having such a good time together. They talk of naught but the sea and buried treasure. My brother needs me not."

"Go then, and get ready. Be quick, my child, and speak naught of where we go, nor for what purpose."

Kitty nodded, and hurried up-stairs to dress. With the aid of Araminta she was ready by the time the coach was before the door. Cornelia saw them off, audibly commenting on the impropriety of leaving before dinner, and voicing her surprise at the suddenness of the journey. But they started at length, and soon were being carried rapidly toward the city. It was a silent drive, neither the lady nor the child being in a talkative mood. Madame Gerritt did not speak until the coach stopped before the door of Mistress Drew's in Broad Street.

"We will see the lieutenant first, Kitty," she remarked. "And then do you stay here with Alida until my return from the Governor's. We must not dally at either place."

"A good day to you, Madame Gerritt," spoke the voice of Mistress Drew who appeared in the open door of the house at this juncture. "I give you greeting and welcome. What brings you from the country on so warm a day? All are well, I trust? Come in, come in; dinner is just put on the table."

"Be pleased to excuse me to-day, Mistress Drew," responded Madame Gerritt, returning the greeting cordially. "I came to town not for visiting, but for business. 'Tis urgent, else I would not decline to dine with you. Is Lieutenant Pickering at home?"

"No, but may be at any moment. Will you come in to wait for him?"

Madame Gerritt hesitated, seemed as though she were about to alight from the coach, then shook her head.

"It were best not," she said. "I thank you, Mistress Drew, but I am full of business to-day. If it will not trouble you I should like for Kitty to wait here for me. Then when I come back we will speak for a moment with the lieutenant. Cannot you and Alida come to us for a visit soon? 'Twould do you both good to come to the bouwerie for a time."

"We shall be pleased to come, madam. Come right in, Kitty. Alida is somewhere off at play, but I make no doubt but that she will be here shortly. It is dinner time, and that generally brings her home. I will tell the lieutenant that you wish to see him, Madame Gerritt."

"Thank you, Mistress Drew. You are very kind. I shall not be gone long, Kitty. Good day!"

Old Peter cracked his whip, and the coach drove off while Kitty followed Mrs. Drew up the steps of the stoop. The good woman turned to her.

"You will not refuse to eat with me, will you, Kitty? Well, I do declare, if there isn't Lieutenant Pickering coming down the street now! Madame Gerritt would not have had long to wait, would she? We will tell him about your grandmother wishing to see him so that he will not go away again, and then go to dinner."

"Dear Mistress Drew, let me tell him," said Kitty, making up her mind instantly to lose no time in telling the young officer about Dirck. "And do you go in to dinner. We have kept you from it too long. My Aunt Cornelia likes not to wait. She says good victuals are spoiled by so doing."

"It is true that they are not improved by waiting," laughed Mrs. Drew. "But mind, Kitty! when you are through talking with Lieutenant Pickering you are to come right in."

"Yes, I will," answered Kitty. "And now do go, Mistress Drew. I like not to think of your good dinner getting cold."

The lady laughed again, and went into the house just as the English officer ascended the steps. He smiled as he caught sight of Kitty.

"How are you, Kate?" he said in the old bantering manner that she remembered so well. "Are you waiting to see Alida? The last I saw of her she was munching sweets just around the corner of Wall Street. Perchance there may be a few left if you run there quickly."

The greeting was so different from what she had expected that Kitty was speechless. He had been so grave, so kind on the day when they had burned the paper that she thought that it would be the easiest thing in the world to tell him all about Dirck. Now she was tongue-tied. She could only stand and look at him, but

her glance spoke volumes. With a light laugh the young man came to her side.

"I do believe that it is myself and not Alida whom you have come to see," he said. "Is it not so, Kitty?"

Kitty nodded.

"Are you troubled?" he asked gently. "Tell me what it is."

"'Tis about my brother," answered Kitty, finding her tongue at once. "He that was taken in October by the King's men for the navy."

"I remember. 'Twas then that we became acquainted."

"Yes, that was so, sir. He likes the service, but still he did wish to see us too. We are his own people, and 'tis right for him to want to visit us. Well then, when the *Dolphin*, his ship, came into the Sound a few days ago my brother asked the skipper to let him come ashore, but the skipper would not give him leave. He said that the next time over he might visit the city, but it was long to wait. You see Dirck had not seen us, nor heard from us since he was impressed, and so—so he came anyway."

"I see," spoke Lieutenant Pickering gravely. "He deserted."

"No. Dirck did not intend to desert. He only wanted to make us a visit, and then return to his ship. But he had to swim the Hell Gate to get to shore, because he had no boat, and when he did reach the beach he

fell and struck his head on a rock. When we found him he knew naught, and lay as though dead. He hath not been able to go back though he wishes to do so, and then my uncle will not hear to it."

"Why not, little girl?"

"'Tis the punishment that Dirck will have to undergo," broke from Kitty with a sob. "My brother may be put in irons, or flogged, or worse may befall him. Uncle Jacobus cannot bear it."

"Still, Kitty, your brother has been guilty of disobedience to orders, and discipline must be maintained, you know?"

"Yes; that is what Dirck said. He wishes to go back, and take the punishment. He says the skipper is right about it; but Uncle Jacobus will not have it."

"Come now! your brother hath the right sort of spirit. 'Tis the thing he should do. And why do you come to me?"

"Because you said," Kitty paused, finding it more difficult to speak than she had thought. "You said," she went on bravely, "that if the time came when any of us was in trouble the good offices of a King's man might not come amiss. Uncle Jacobus said this morning that the good offices of an Englishman were needed in the case."

"And did he send you to me, Kitty?"

"Oh, no, sir. He knows not that we came. You see, Grandmother and I never told him about the stamped

paper. She said that 'twas a matter that would better rest among us three, as no good would come of the telling. So Uncle Jacobus knows naught of it. When I heard him say that the good offices of an Englishman were needed I remembered what you had said about helping us. So I reminded Grandmother of what you had said, and asked her to take me with her into the city. She was coming to see the Governor. She said that the military and the navy were not connected, and that she saw not how you could do aught in the case. Still she thought it no harm to try, and so she brought me here. She expected to tell you about it, but you were not here, and she went on to see Sir Henry Moore. When I saw you I could not wait for her to come to tell you, but told you myself."

"I see," he said. "In the main she is right about the military and the navy having no connection. We are two distinct branches of His Majesty's service, and ordinarily there would be naught that a lieutenant could do. In this particular instance, however, I may be able to do something. A promise made is a promise to be redeemed. Let me see," regarding her musingly. "Methinks that blue eyes will help the matter along."

"But your eyes are not blue," declared she, glancing up at him quickly. "Grietje said once that they were black as night. That was foolishness, for night is not always black. Sometimes the moon shines, and then it is quite light."

"Oh, you matter-of-fact child! have you no poetry in your nature? But 'tis no matter! Now what say you, Kate? Shall blue eyes and black storm the ogre in his den? I mean," he hastened to explain as he caught her puzzled look, "will you go with me to the *Dolphin* to see the skipper, as you term its captain, to find if we can do anything for this brother of yours?"

Kitty gasped.

"Go to the *Dolphin?*" she exclaimed. "Why! must we do that?"

"I think so. In my opinion that is the only thing to be done. I want you to tell the captain just what you have told me about Dirck. I have a name to conjure with, but I shall want you with me."

"If—if Grandmother will let me I will go," hesitated she. "And if it will help Dirck I know that she will let me."

"I think so too. You came to me for help, Kitty, so I am going to do just what I think will be of service. For that reason we are going to start for the *Dolphin* at once without waiting for your grandmother. However, I will leave a note for her, telling her where we have gone, and why. I will say also that I will leave you at the farm so that she need not wait here for you. 'Twill take a long time. Sit you here on the stoop while I write it."

Kitty stared after him as he left her, inwardly quaking at the mere idea of facing Dirck's commander. But

if it would help him she must do it, she told herself. All too soon Lieutenant Pickering rejoined her.

"The note is writ, Kate," he cried gayly. "Right about—face! And ho, for the *Dolphin!*"

CHAPTER XXI

A PROMISE REDEEMED

At the foot of Maiden Lane were the Fly Market stairs to the river, and here Lieutenant Pickering engaged a waterman to take them to the *Dolphin.* Ceremoniously he helped Kitty into the periagua.

"It may be a tedious trip, Kitty Kate," he remarked as he seated himself beside her. "A tedious trip, the tide being contrary, but I dare say that we'll make it in good season. Egad, child! I have you to thank for a break in the dreary monotony of things. 'Tis no end of a lark."

But Kitty, little dreaming that his gay manner and light words were adopted purely with the kind intent of setting her at ease, looked up at him reproachfully. It was no lark to her. Her heart was beating like a trip hammer, and she was thoroughly frightened.

Had she not been so fearful she might have enjoyed the row up the Sound River, for it was beautiful. Not a cloud flecked the blue of the sky. The broad stream with its swirling currents foamed and rippled in the May sunshine. On their left lay the little city, nestled among its tree-crowned hills, its Dutch red-tiled roofs showing with rich contrast against the billowy green of the foliage. On their right, the heights of Nassau Island rose like a low, green mountain, topped here and there by a white residence. These were soon left in their wake, and the winding shore of Manhattan unfolded before them like a panorama. There were broad bays and deep inlets fringed with forests above which swelled the richly wooded uplands, purple with the mists of spring. The outgoing tide made their progress slow, but after a time the bold promontories of the Long Island [1] came into view. Kitty pointed out the bouwerie to the young officer, and the tall pine tree towering above its fellows. The waterman swung out into the middle of the river here, for it was low water now and Hell Gate might be passed in safety. At flood-tide also its whirlpools and rapids were not dangerous, and Kitty told this to the lieutenant as they rowed over the seething strait. The young man gazed at its eddies with a shudder.

"Egad!" he exclaimed. "That brother of yours must be a bold fellow to weather such a piece of water.

[1] Now Blackwell's Island.

I am counted something of a swimmer, but I should not care to try it."

"But Dirck had to do it to reach us," said Kitty. "He said that had he not known its eddies and currents he could never have come through. We always come up here for the summer, and Dirck has been on the river often and often. That is how he knew about it."

Even at low water the 'Gate taxed the energies of the waterman who rowed them, but the boat was out of it at length, and the *Dolphin* lay straight ahead of them. The vessel was a picture as she swung at anchor on the water, her image fairly reflected in it, her guns gleaming in the sunshine, and from the boats at her davits to the flaming speck of bunting hanging at the main peak she appeared in perfect order. Lieutenant Pickering's eyes kindled at the sight, and he took off his hat to the ensign of Great Britain. But Kitty's emotion was anything but enthusiasm. Involuntarily she drew closer to him, and her lips began to quiver. He smiled at her.

"There is no need to tremble," he said. "Be brave now, and speak right out in answer to anything the captain may ask you. Remember that your brother's welfare depends upon it."

Kitty nodded assent, and glued her eyes on the hull of the frigate. So big and black it seemed, and so high above them. As the waterman rowed alongside the vessel she saw a sailor looking down at them from the deck, and heard a voice shouting the order:

"Ship the steps, my lads. Pass your painter, friend, and I'll make it fast. Look out for my sides."

Soon the rowboat was made fast, and fearfully Kitty climbed the steps, the officer on the deck leaning down to assist her. Lieutenant Pickering followed closely after her, saluting the officer of the deck courteously as he stepped aboard.

"I wish to speak with the captain," he said. "I am Lieutenant Robert Pickering, of the forty-fourth regiment of foot, under General Gage."

The officer of the deck saluted. "Captain Chandler is in the cabin, sir. I will ——"

At this moment a tall, gray-haired man, of fine physique and commanding mien, emerged from below deck, and approached them. The officer of the deck saluted.

"Lieutenant Robert Pickering, of the Forty-fourth Foot, desires to speak with you, sir," he said.

"Any officer in His Majesty's service is welcome, sir," spoke the captain. "Your sister, I presume?" turning his glance upon Kitty who was gazing at him timidly.

"No, Captain, a little friend. Kitty, your brother's skipper, Captain Chandler. Captain, Mistress Catherine Gerritt, of New York."

Kitty drew herself to her full height, and made her best courtesy. When she looked up the captain was regarding her with a puzzled expression.

"Her brother's skipper, say you, Lieutenant? Why,

that must be a mistake. We have no one aboard by the name of Gerritt."

"Doth not Dirck Gerritt belong to this vessel, Captain?" asked the lieutenant in surprise.

"I never heard the name before, sir," came the amazing reply. "Pleasure me by coming into the cabin. Perchance we can talk better if we are seated."

A quizzical look came into the young man's eyes as he turned to find Kitty the picture of bewilderment.

"Perchance we may be the better able to straighten out the matter there," he said in answer to the captain's invitation. "Lead on, sir. I make no doubt but that we will soon get to the bottom of the misunderstanding."

"Tell Mr. Hardy to come into the cabin, Mr. Earle," said the captain to the officer of the deck as he led the way into the cabin. "The mate can tell us about the name, Lieutenant."

Scarcely were they seated when a tall man with weather-beaten face entered. The skipper turned to him quickly.

"The First Mate, Mr. Hardy," he said by way of introduction. "Lieutenant Pickering and Mistress Gerritt, of New York, Mr. Hardy. They wish to know if we have a man on board by the name of Gerritt."

"No, sir," came the answer in positive tones. "Never heard of him."

"Oh, but you must have," broke from Kitty, unable to keep silent any longer. "He was taken by the King's

men, and brought to this very ship when she lay in the bay last October. Do you not remember? He left the vessel just a few days ago to come to see us."

"'Bless my soul, Captain, if she don't mean Dutchy," came from the mate.

"'Dutchy?' To be sure." The captain bent forward and studied Kitty's face intently. "I see the resemblance now. So you are Dutchy's sister, eh? Well, what have you to say for him? He deserted a few days since."

The courteous tones with which he had greeted her changed now to those of sternness. Kitty shivered as she noticed it, and glanced quickly at Lieutenant Pickering, expecting that he would make reply. For some reason he remained silent; so, plucking up her courage, she answered:

"He meant not to desert, sir. He wished to come to see us for just a little while. He was homesick. But he wants to come back."

"H'm!" growled the captain gruffly. "Why doesn't the lubber do it then?"

"Because he is not able to come yet. He swam the Hell Gate, and was so buffeted by the waves and currents that he was like to drown," explained Kitty, unconsciously lapsing into Dirck's own words. "When he did reach the shore he was wholly blown, and so exhausted that when he started to walk he fell prone on the sand, and struck his head on a stone as he did so.

When we found him lying there he did not know us; no, nor did he know anything."

"How came you to look for him? Were you expecting him?" The skipper was studying her face keenly.

"Why, no." Kitty shook her curls emphatically. "We had seen the ship as she lay at anchor here, but we knew not that it was the *Dolphin*. Newty Timm and I had come down to the tall pine tree to dig for treasure. We thought that we had found it when we heard Dirck groan, though of course we knew not that it was my brother. Newty and I thought that the dead buccaneer who is always buried with gold to guard it was after us. We ran to the house and told my uncle who went at once to see what it was. And it was Dirck."

"Whereabouts were you digging for treasure, Mistress Gerritt?"

"Why, under the tall pine tree. It stands so high that it can be seen for miles on the water," she told him, unconscious of the fact that she was revealing the location of her home, and consequently where Dirck was. Captain Chandler's mouth relaxed the merest trifle, and he glanced at Lieutenant Pickering significantly.

"H'm! When does your brother intend to return?"

"I know not, sir. My uncle will not let him come for fear of the punishment. It might be that he would be put in irons, or flogged, or even put to death should it be thought that he deserted, which he hath not." Kitty paused to wipe away the tears that would come. The

two men continued silent, and with a quick glance of apprehension at the stern face of the captain she half whispered: "You would not treat my brother so, sir, would you?"

"See here, he's guilty. He took shore-leave without permission. If I were to overlook it in him every man jack of the crew would be doing the same thing. Discipline must be maintained no matter who offends. Disobedience to orders cannot be passed over. Let the lad come back and stand his punishment. 'Twill be the better for him."

"That is what Dirck wants to do," Kitty told him in trembling accents. "But my uncle will not let him. Dirck says that a man at sea must stand to things as they are."

"The boy hath more sense than his uncle," declared the skipper, rising to show that the interview was at an end. "Tell him to let that lad come back to-morrow, or I will come and take him. I won't have the discipline of my ship interfered with by a senseless Dutchman."

For an instant Kitty stared at him as though she could not believe her ears. Never before had she heard Jacobus spoken of so slightingly, and her slight frame quivered with indignation. All fear of the captain vanished. Stand for anything to be said against Jacobus she would not. For only a brief moment was she speechless, and then the vials of her wrath were uncorked.

Springing to her feet she marched straight up to the skipper looking up at him with blazing eyes.

"My uncle is a Dutchman," she cried. "But that he is without sense is not true. He hath great sense, as everyone who knows him says. You do not know him else you would not say anything against him. He is the kindest and best man in the world. And you cannot take my brother from him. He has rights over Dirck, for he is his guardian. He says so, and my uncle knows. And he was angry that the King's men took Dirck. The citizens were angry too that so young a boy should be seized for the King's service. Dirck should have been given permission to see his people when he was torn from us as he was without having a voice in the matter. Uncle Jacobus says that his nephew shall not stand whatever you choose to give him, though he did say that the life was doing him good, and that if it were not for this punishment and what might befall my brother when you are at sea he would be willing for him to come back. But now, now I shall tell him that Dirck must not return, for unkind you are, and cruel too. And against my dear uncle you have spoken."

"Upon my word!" ejaculated Captain Chandler, staring down at her with a flicker of amusement on his face. It was gone instantly, and was replaced by his usual expression of grimness. "That is all very fine, child. I have no doubt but that your uncle is everything that you say. Still, the fact remains that he must either

let that youngster come back, or I must treat him as a deserter. And that will go hard with him. That is how the matter stands, and it ends it."

"A moment if you please, Captain," spoke Lieutenant Pickering, coming forward. "Let me have a word first."

"May I ask how it concerns you, sir?" came from the skipper testily.

"This little girl did me a great service once, Captain. I promised then that if ever the time came that I could do anything for her, or for any member of her family, I would serve them. Captain, let that boy come back upon terms that will give his people ease of mind concerning his future. He was o'er young to be taken in the first place. As Kitty says it raised a great hue and cry. The matter was even brought to the King's notice. Such acts work ill for His Majesty's cause with the colonists. Justice tempered with mercy will not come amiss in this instance."

"Since when have the military taken to dictating to the navy, Lieutenant Pickering? Captain Chandler takes advice from no man as to how he shall deal with his crew."

"Not even from the Board of Admiralty, Captain? Lord Howe sits upon it, and hath been appointed Treasurer of the navy. I am his nephew. 'Tis sometimes well to have a friend at court, and Robert Pickering never forgets a favor."

The young man toyed carelessly with a signet ring that he wore upon the third finger of his right hand. Over the captain's face a curious expression flitted as his eyes rested upon the ring. He started forward, hesitated, then turning toward Kitty spoke abruptly.

"Well, well, I may have been o'er hasty. The boy is not half bad as boys go. How old is your brother, Miss?"

"Fifteen, sir. He will be sixteen next October."

"H'm! I thought him older. I remember being angry that he was brought to me instead of a man. I was in sore need of one at the time. Well, in consideration of his youth I will be lenient in the matter of punishment. That is," speaking with harshness, "if he will come back of his own accord. It must be seen that he does this. He has been guilty of disobedience which cannot be passed over. There will be a punishment, but he shall be neither flogged nor put in irons. Tell your uncle this, and assure him that he need have no fear concerning the treatment of the lad upon the high seas. But mark you, Miss! that boy must not know one syllable of this. He must return not knowing that leniency hath been bespoken in his behalf. Can you be trusted not to tell him, I wonder?"

"Absolutely, Captain," said the young officer. "I have cause to know it. You will promise the captain to tell no one but your uncle, Kitty, will you not? That is, until after your brother hath seen the skipper."

"Yes," cried Kitty eagerly. "I promise."

"Then the sooner he returns the better it will be," spoke the captain. "Tell that to your uncle also. He is being searched for, and should he be taken I would have to deal with him as a deserter."

"I will tell Uncle Jacobus, sir," Kitty said.

"Then I think that our mission is ended, Kitty Kate," said the lieutenant. "Captain Chandler, it will give me great pleasure to have the honor of a return visit. I shall remember your kindness. Good day, sir. Come, Kitty."

But Kitty stood as though reluctant to leave. Hesitating just a second she turned and went quickly to the skipper's side.

"So good you are," she cried, seizing his hand and kissing it. "No wonder my brother wants to come back to you."

"There, there, child! I dare say I'm a pretty gruff old salt. Egad, Lieutenant! if they all have her spirit it might be to the interest of the English navy to impress a crew of Dutch youngsters."

"If the King had wiser councilors it might not be necessary to use impressment," observed the young man gravely. "Again I bid you good day, Captain."

CHAPTER XXII

IN HONOR OF THE KING

EIGHT bells were striking as the waterman pulled the periagua away from the *Dolphin*. Kitty sat so silent beside the young officer, and with such an expression of wonder on her face that he threw back his head and laughed.

"What is puzzling that curly head now?" he asked.

"The skipper, and what it was that made him change," Kitty told him promptly. "He was cross at first. To punish Dirck was his wish, yet he changed. Why did he? I could see naught that you did to make him."

"'Twas the magic of a name, Kate. As a matter of fact, the captain was entirely in the right. Had it not

been for your brother's youth and the circumstances of his seizure even my promise to you would not have justified my interference in the affair. As it is, be satisfied with the result, and question not too closely how it was obtained. 'Fore George! there's a pun for you! Question not too closely as to how (Howe) it was obtained. 'Tis pity that so good an one is lost upon you, Kitty, but so it is. Such a thing it is to be Dutch!"

"'Tis very good to be Dutch," remarked she complacently. "'Tis good to be English too if people are like you. I think that next to Uncle Jacobus you are the best and the kindest man in the world."

"That is high praise, Kitty, from you. I wonder," regarding her thoughtfully, "if ever you could be brought to think more of another than he? But see! is not that the landing place at your home? It hath not taken long to come down."

"And thanked you I have not," spoke Kitty contritely. "So happy have you made me that I know not what to say, or how to thank you."

"Then don't. I have but tried to pay my debt, little friend. 'Twas done at no inconvenience to myself, so let us say no more about it. When next we meet may neither one of us be in trouble."

The waterman swung the periagua into the shore, then leaped out and held it fast while the officer assisted Kitty to the bank. The young fellow then took off his hat and swept her a deep bow.

"Good-bye, Kate," he said. "Present my compliments to your grandmother, and tell her that I was sorry to have missed her. Perchance she will honor me another time."

"I will tell her, sir. And I wish," added Kitty solemnly, "that I could do something for you. Could I not carry some message to Grietje ——"

But Robert Pickering shook his head, and sank back into the boat laughing. The waterman pulled away from the shore, and soon the boat was out of speaking distance. Kitty stood watching it until a bend in the shore hid it from view, then turned and ran into the house.

Jacobus sat with his mother in the hall, his head bowed upon his hands, his whole attitude that of deep dejection. Kitty smiled at her grandmother so brightly that the lady started up with eager, questioning look. The little girl nodded, then placed a finger suggestively on her lips.

"I must tell no one but Uncle Jacobus about it," she said as Jacobus raised his head. "Thou wilt not mind, dear Grandmother? I promised the skipper."

Madame Gerritt rose at once.

"Then I will leave you with him, little one," she said, understanding from Kitty's demeanor that all was well.

"'Twas a wild goose chase that you and Mother went on, Kitty," spoke Jacobus moodily as his mother left the room. "She hath told me of the lieutenant and

the stamped paper, and of the young man's promise. The military have no more to do with the navy than has the Governor. The only thing that he could promise was that he would write a letter to the ship's commander recommending clemency in the matter. Of what avail would the gratitude of a lieutenant be if His Excellency can do no more? So that is all that can be done."

"Dear uncle, it is not all." Kitty perched herself on his knee, and wound her arms about his neck. "Everything hath come out all right. Dirck can go back without being either flogged, or put in irons. The skipper says so, though Dirck is not to know it. And you need not fear for him when he is on the high seas. Captain Chandler himself said to tell you so."

"Dunder and Blitzen! what magic is this?" ejaculated Jacobus, staring at her.

"The magic of a name," Kitty told him, half laughing, half crying. "Oh, Uncle Jacobus, Dirck is not to know a thing about it. I am to tell no one but you."

"Well then, suppose you tell me, little one," he suggested, holding her close to him. "What a brave little one you have been to go to the *Dolphin* to see the skipper. I liked it not when Mother told me where thou hadst gone, but that seems to have been the very thing to do."

"Lieutenant Pickering said that it was," said Kitty. "Now, thou dear uncle, I shall tell thee all and every-

thing." And with this she related what had taken place.

"I see," said he when she had finished the recital. "I understand it all. But how I am to tell the boy that he may return to the vessel after the stand I have taken, I know not."

It was Dirck himself who solved the problem that very evening. When the family were gathered around the supper table the lad looked at his uncle, and spoke abruptly.

"Uncle Jacobus, hast seen how much I have eaten? Dost not think that my appetite is good?"

"Fair, my boy, fair. Why?"

"Because, Uncle Jacobus, any fellow who can eat the way I do is not sick. And if I am not sick I have no business to be here. I ought to go back to the *Dolphin*. I like not for the skipper to think that I have deserted."

"Do you wish it so much, Dirck?" Jacobus stared hard at his plate so as not to see their surprised looks.

"Yes, yes, Uncle," spoke the boy eagerly. "'Tis right that I should go."

"Dirck, if you feel so about it I will no longer oppose your return. See now! if the same way you think in the morning I myself will row you to the *Dolphin*." Jacobus rose as he spoke and started for the door.

But with a "Huzza!" Dirck sprang from his chair, and caught him before he reached it. "Don't go yet,"

he said, giving him a great squeeze. "Why, I haven't seen half enough of you." And with this Jacobus was forced to return to the table.

"And yet he knows not what may befall him," commented he to his mother as the lad began to execute a sailor's hornpipe to the merriment of Newty Timm and Kitty. "I have been wrong to keep him here, Mother. I see it now."

As he had promised, Jacobus rowed the lad to the ship the next morning, and, at the solicitation of its commander, went aboard for a visit. When he came back his face was wreathed in smiles.

"Gracious indeed was the skipper," he told the assembled family. "No more do I fear for Dirck. All is well with him, Mother. All is well."

All was indeed well. Not only for Dirck, but for the colonists also. On May twentieth the glorious news was received that the Stamp Act was repealed. From various quarters came confirmation of the tidings, creating the greatest excitement in the city. New York went wild with joy. Jacobus heard of it, and greatly elated hastened out to the bouwerie to impart the intelligence.

"'Twas the Non-Importation Agreement that brought it about," he cried exultantly. "That, coupled with the advice of William Pitt, brought the King and his Parliament to their senses. We are going to celebrate in honor of the repeal. The greatest celebration that New York has ever seen. On the King's birthday

it is to be. And the Assembly hath voted that a statue of the King mounted upon his horse shall be set up in the Bowling Green to commemorate his graciousness. A statue also of William Pitt, the friend of America, shall we raise, but where hath not yet been decided. Into the city shall we go to be present at the celebration. A great and glorious time it is to be! On the King's birthday."

"Is not that the fourth of June?" asked Kitty. "So funny it is, Uncle Jacobus, always to have my birthday on the same day as the King has his. I shall be fourteen then."

"Thy birthday, little one?" Jacobus turned her gently toward him. "Why, so it is. Then must we have two celebrations: thine and the King's."

"And a statue of me shall you put up?" asked she roguishly.

Jacobus laughed.

"There is no need of that, Kitty. What a great girl you are getting to be."

* * * * * * * *

Never before had such extensive preparations been made to celebrate a sovereign's birthday as the citizens of New York City made for this occasion. So elated and rejoiced were the people that they resolved to make of it an opportunity to show their gratitude for the repeal of the obnoxious act.

The day dawned, beautiful and bright. Fair as the

hopes of the people for the future. All the bells of the churches in the city pealed forth a pæon of joy. Then the Battery broke forth in a royal salute answered by the men-of-war and the merchant vessels lying in the harbor, " decked in all the Pageantry of colors." Joyous acclamations rent the air as the crowds surged through the streets from the Common to the Fort, and back again to the Fields.

There was feasting throughout the city: at the Governor's mansion in the Fort, and at all the taverns; while the mass of the people gathered on the Common where food and drink had been provided in abundance, and two large fat oxen were roasted whole.

Jacobus and his family dined at the New York Arms on the Broad Way near the Fields so that they might be in sight of all that went on, on the Common. In the afternoon they went over to see the " mighty roast beef," and be present at the erection of the Liberty Pole which was to be set up by the Sons of Liberty to commemorate the repeal. It was erected on the north side of the Common, and was a mast with a flagstaff at the top displaying colors: an emblem of the principles of the people. Around it were assembled the Sons of Liberty, who dedicated it to King George, William Pitt, and Liberty.

" 'Tis a glorious day, Marinus," spoke Jacobus, addressing Marinus Willett who stood among the group around the pole.

" A glorious day indeed, Jacobus," returned Mr.

Willett. "Know you if the King's statue hath been assigned, and where it is to be set up?"

"It hath not yet been assigned, but it is to be set up in the Bowling Green. An equestrian one it is to be. The Assembly will spare no expense to make it worthy of our gracious King. Ah! 'tis good to have tranquillity once more."

"True, if it will last," returned Mr. Willett gloomily. "But I fear, Jacobus. I fear."

"What?" questioned Mr. Gerritt anxiously.

"Note yon company of soldiers, Jacobus?" Mr. Willett indicated the Company whose barracks were in the Common. "Saw you ever such dark looks as they are casting on this group about the Pole? They regard the Pole as emblematic of our victory and their defeat. I fear that trouble may come between them and ——"

The speaker's words were lost in a mighty shout which at this moment went up from the people:

"Long live the King! The King! The King, the *darling* of the people!"

"'Tis wrong you are, Marinus," spoke Jacobus smiling. "While such feeling exists among the people our Sovereign will permit naught to happen that will offend them. Come, Mother! Cornelia, and the children! it grows dusk, and the day is spent. Home let us go."

"Just a moment, Uncle Jacobus," called Kitty from a distance. "Newty and I are going to help light the bonfire."

An instant later a great blaze shot into the air as torches were applied to the huge mass of tar barrels that had been gathered for the occasion, and Kitty and Newty Timm ran back to the family as again the people shouted:

"Long live the King! Long live our Gracious Majesty, King George!"

THE END